



**Academic Viewpoints on Spirituality in Higher Education:
An Exploratory Qualitative Study**

by

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Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Tasmania

2018

Declaration of Originality

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information and duly acknowledged in the thesis, and to the best of my knowledge and belief it contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text or the thesis, nor does the thesis contain any material that infringes copyright.

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Statement of Co-authorship

The material in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 has been published in a co-authored paper with Associate Professor Helen Chick, and Associate Professor Mark Dibben. The material was jointly conceptualised, the data analysis and a first draft were done by Lubna Siddiqi and Associate Professor Mark Dibben, and Associate Professor Helen Chick, edited the final draft.

Siddiqi, L.A., Chick, H.L., & Dibben, M. (2017). Spirituality and its role in responsible leadership and decision- making. *Responsible Leadership and Ethical Decision-Making*. 63-81. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1108/S1529-209620170000017009>.

Signature:

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Date: 25th October 2017

Conference Presentations and Proceedings

The following conference presentations and proceedings are directly related to the research contained in this thesis

Siddiqi, L.A. (2016, December). Spirituality in higher education to develop well rounded ethical and moral professionals: Academics' perspectives from a regional university in Australia. *Australasian Business Ethics Network Conference (ABEN)*, in Brisbane, QLD.

Siddiqi, L.A. (2016, June). Spirituality and its role in responsible leadership, and ethical decision-making. *Australian Association of Professional and Applied Ethics Annual Conference (AAPAE)*, Adelaide, SA.

Siddiqi, L.A. (2013, December). Spirituality in higher education. *Australasian Business Ethics Network Conference (ABEN)*, Hobart, TAS.

Siddiqi, L.A. (2013, November). Spirituality in higher education, *University of Tasmania Postgraduate Education Conference*, Launceston, TAS.

Siddiqi, L.A. (2013, September). Can incorporating the concept of Spirituality within the faculties of Education and Business improve the quality of future professionals emerging from UTAS? *Sharing Excellence in Research Conference*, Hobart, TAS.

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Statement of Ethical Conduct

The research associated with this thesis abides by the international and Australian codes on human and animal experimentation, the guidelines by the Australian Government's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator, and the rulings of the Safety, Ethics and Institutional Biosafety Committees of the University. The ethics reference number for this research is H0014638

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Date: 25th October 2017

Abstract

Although concepts like “ethics” are taught in higher education, organisations in many countries seem unable to mitigate the negative behaviour arising from ethical dilemmas and issues within the workplace. This has led academics to research the role of “spirituality” in higher education. Spirituality is now regarded as a concept separate from organised religion that gives meaning and connection to life and work. It is suggested that spirituality might enable students to develop a sense of themselves as responsible individuals, capable of creating meaning and purpose within their own lives, and the lives of others, by connecting with themselves, people, and their work.

Within Australia there has been increased interest in spirituality within school education, yet significant research in the area of higher education is lacking. This study addresses this gap in an Australian regional university—the University of Tasmania—and focuses on two faculties: the Faculty of Education and the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics. These faculties were selected because of their impact on society; education graduates influence individuals through school and other teaching, and business graduates influence the economy at both small and large scales. Academics from both faculties were interviewed in this exploratory multiple case study, to examine academics’ viewpoints on the incorporation of spirituality in teacher and business education, and its impact on students’ professional identity.

Three topics emerged from the data, addressing the “Nature of Spirituality”, “Spirituality in the Higher Education Curriculum”, and “Teaching Spirituality.” Within these topics a number of themes were identified. Key themes associated with the first topic included academics’ understanding of spirituality, as a religious or secular concept. In the second topic, key themes addressed academics’ perceptions of

including spirituality within higher education, and the topics they perceived could be taught within their faculties. Finally, themes associated with teaching spirituality included the pedagogical approaches that academics could use to teach spirituality, and which could help students develop their professional identities, together with the challenges faced by academics to teach spirituality in higher education.

Among the academics there was no consensus about the nature of spirituality, and all perceived a need for a commonly understood academic definition of spirituality. They suggested adapting a range of pedagogical approaches to teaching spirituality, and believed that spirituality could have a positive impact on students' professional identities. They all felt that there are some challenges to incorporating spirituality into their respective curricula, with most believing that it should be taught indirectly, rather than overtly. Some education academics were already teaching a unit that includes spiritual wellbeing, and suggested units such as "spirituality and decision-making" that could be taught with an underpinning of spirituality. Some academics in the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics teach ethics and include a spiritual element within it, and suggested additional units that could be taught within the business school.

This study revealed that academics generally perceive the inclusion of spirituality to be beneficial to students' development as professionals, enabling students to reflect before making decisions that impact themselves and others. Academics also felt that incorporating spirituality in higher education would require careful planning, and involve determining consensus on a definition of spirituality, and addressing the perception that spirituality is irrelevant in higher education.

Dedication

This research is dedicated to my two children, Yasha and Alysha, without whose support and sacrifices this thesis would not have been possible.

I would also like to dedicate this thesis to my father, Dr Asrar H. Siddiqi, who encouraged me to follow his footsteps, but passed away before I could complete my PhD.

Acknowledgments

Firstly, I would like to thank God and the Baha'i Faith. Both inspired me to work on this research project, and to continue striving through the challenges I've had to face during this study.

I would like to thank my main supervisor Dr Helen Chick, for her pivotal role in my completing this research on time. I have learnt so much from you within this one year, and feel a deep gratitude that you took me on at such a crucial time in my study.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank my other two supervisors, Dr Mark Dibben and Dr Rob Macklin, for their continuous guidance and support during this project. Your insights and knowledge have been inspirational and kept me going through the various challenges over the years.

I would also like to thank Professor Monica Cuskelly for her continuous support and guidance during my PhD studies, and enabling me to complete this project. Additionally, I would also like to thank the Graduate Research Office and the Coordinators for providing me with the opportunities that helped me develop and improve my research skills.

I also acknowledge Dr Kerry Howells for accepting my proposal for this study and enabling me to get through the various processes.

A big heartfelt thanks to the academics within the Faculty of Education and the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics, who participated in this study and provided valuable input for the data. I would also like to thank the academics and

other staff members from both faculties, who did not participate in the study, but provided me with valuable insights, support, guidance and collegiality.

I would also like to thank my family, friends, and the Baha'i community in Australia and internationally, for their love, support, and prayers whenever requested. I would specially like to thank Val, Peter, Diana, Erica, John, and Jim for their belief in my abilities and being there in times of need. Despite being alone and away from my family, they made me feel that I had a family here too.

Finally, I thank my children Yasha and Alysha, while you were not here with me, you were there with me in "spirit". Technology has made life easier, yet not being in proximity with your children is challenging. Your sacrifices, wisdom, motivation, and support in every possible way, despite being so far away, have made this research possible and got it completed. Love you and thank you for being the wonderful people you are.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

If we have to reshape our economic, political and religious institutions we need something that has deeper roots than our institutional settings. We need something that can restore a sense of shared meaning, responsibility and purpose. This something is what we may call spirituality.

(Bouckaert, 2015, p. 16)

1.1 Introduction

There seems to be a growing interest in “spirituality” within academic circles since the late twentieth century, as evidenced in the number of books, articles, and research being conducted especially in higher education (Harris & Crossman, 2005; Korac-Kakabadse, Kouzmin, & Kakabadse, 2002; Phipps, 2012). This interest has been ascribed in literature to the numerous ethical and moral issues within society, such as “racial tension, drug cultures, family issues, and an obsession with materialism” (Crossman, 2009, p. 237). Taplin (2014) extends this, identifying the need for security and stability, meaning and purpose in life, and making money as the only important things in a materialistic society, which measures an individual’s self-

worth accordingly. These issues have created a need for a connection between the mind, body, and spirit (Taplin, 2014), which has led academia to research the concept of spirituality.

“Spirituality” is a concept that has been around for centuries within theological contexts, and has played an important role in shaping human activity and society world over. The differences in spiritual practices and ethical standards within societies is a result of the core values of spirituality and ethics that come from different cultural heritages and religious backgrounds (Mahadevan, 2013). Until recently, the concept of spirituality was associated specifically with religion, but over time it has evolved into a stand-alone concept separate from religion and theology (McLean, 1994).

During the 1960s, in-depth studies were conducted on spirituality with a focus on education, and by the 1980s, business education formally introduced the concept along the lines of ethics and philosophy (McLean, 1994). The 1990s saw significant research on spirituality, which continues today. A number of studies have been done in the area of spirituality within the schools of nursing, law, medicine, education, social science and business at university level (Bell-Ellis, Jones, Longstreth, & Neal, 2015; Crossman, 2009; Harris & Crossman, 2005). Some studies have tried to identify academics’ understanding of spirituality (Bell-Ellis et al., 2015; Kaufman, 2008; Ma, 2006), while others have discussed the need for and importance of spirituality in higher education, and pedagogical approaches to teaching it (Crossman, 2015a; Fry, 2005; Hood, 2001; Lindholm & Astin, 2008; Neal, 2013; Tisdell, 2010; Trott, 2013).

Ma (2006) conducted a study in a Canadian university regarding the role of spirituality in higher education, and interviewed one academic from each faculty within that university. Although not providing in-depth insights into how academics

viewed spirituality in higher education, the study provided an understanding of the vastness of the concept of spirituality and the limitations researchers face when trying to generate purposeful data.

1.2 The Research Problem

In the literature studied as part of this research, Palmer (2003), Lindholm and Astin (2008), Tisdell (2008), and Pargament (2013) are of the opinion that teaching spirituality in higher education could have a positive impact on students. Many countries, including the US, are now engaged in teaching spirituality in their university courses within various faculties, as a unit or a program. While Australia generally seems to follow the educational trends in the US (Harris & Crossman, 2005), this trend has not been as visible within Australian universities. Some universities teach the concept of spirituality within certain units, some under the guise of ethics, morals, and values; while in others it is part of the hidden curriculum—those practices within educational settings that represent “the values, attitudes, and assumptions toward learning and human relationships” (Purpel, p. 20).

The literature studied also discussed how the incorporation of spirituality within curricula might develop a well-rounded individual, but this was not contextualised in terms of the professional identity of the individual, specifically in the fields of education and business in Australia (Crossman & Clark, 2010). Professional identity is a relatively new concept associated with the idea that individuals develop a self-identity that is required in certain professions and develops over a period of time (Weiner & Torres, 2016; Clark, Hyde, & Drennan, 2013).

In light of the gaps identified, it was decided to conduct this study at a regional university in Australia, the University of Tasmania (UTas). To identify the

faculties that could be beneficial for this study, faculties such as education, business, nursing, law, and humanities were explored as possibilities. A decision was made to limit the study to two faculties: the Faculty of Education and the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics. This both extends and narrows the similarly focussed work of Ma (2006), by purposefully limiting it to only two faculties within the university context, but broadening the number of academics involved. Numerous studies have been conducted in the area of spirituality within the faculties of nursing and health, but there was a lack of significant literature that focused on spirituality within the disciplines of education and business in Australia. With my background in education and business, and since both fields involve relationships and values, it seemed appropriate to select the Faculty of Education and the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics for this study.

The rationale for choosing the Faculty of Education (FoE) at the University of Tasmania is the crucial role academics play in developing teaching professionals (Ellis, 2012). These academics assist pre-service teachers prepare to teach at all levels of education, and help such pre-service teachers shape their future “professional identities” as teachers. This process requires empowering the pre-service teachers with knowledge, attitudes, and skills that enable them to get actively involved with their students’ learning and development activities (Tolliver & Tisdell, 2002). There is an additional need for pre-service teachers to understand the issues surrounding children and young people growing in a changing and influential environment (De Souza, 2016).

Numerous educational policy documents produced by government—like the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians 2008* (The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, (DEECD, 2008), and

the *Health and Wellbeing Curriculum for Schools* (Department of Education, Tasmania (DET), 2008)—address the topic of spiritual wellbeing and spirituality. Teachers are expected to use them in their classrooms, but without any associated guidelines (Crossman, 2009). While education policies are part of the pre-service teacher education program in FoE, their practical application, especially in the area of spiritual wellbeing in schools, is unclear. Academics, who engage with their students at a very deep level, enable pre-service teachers to transform themselves into professionals who act to alleviate issues arising in society (Ellis, 2012; Taplin, 2014; Tolliver & Tisdell, 2002). Hence, the selection of FoE was to explore how academics view spirituality and its role in the development of teachers' professional identities.

The rationale for choosing the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE) is that academics in this faculty help develop skills required by managers, leaders, and business professionals to cater to the need of the wider society. These academics influence the development of the professional identities of their students. Whether this fosters ethical behaviour, or leads to social responsibility within them, is an area that needs further exploration (Basterretxea & Martinez, 2012; Neal, 2008).

Business decisions impact the global economy, creating ripple effects that affect countries, states, organisations, and individuals. All organisations and workplaces require management professionals, and business education is expected to develop such managers. In the TSBE, students are from diverse professional backgrounds, such as law, nursing, philosophy, and agriculture, and they are enrolled to develop their business, accounting or management skills. This diversity also extends to geographical and cultural backgrounds, with local and international students, hailing from Australia, China, India, the Middle East, Africa, and Europe. Some of these students are already employed and are enrolled by their workplaces in

management degree programs to enhance their professional identities and career growth.

Basterretxea and Martinez (2012), Harris and Crossman (2005), and Neal (2008) explain that universities around the world have developed courses, programs, and units that teach spirituality in their business schools within the areas of leadership and management. This study explores whether there is a perceived place for spirituality within the business curriculum at the University of Tasmania.

It can be asserted that the Faculty of Education shapes and develops teaching professionals who impact the lives of people and the society in general, while the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics focuses on the development of business professionals who also impact the lives of people in both the local and international contexts. The professionals emerging from these faculties may have a direct or indirect impact on the ethical, values, and moral base of the global society. It seemed sensible to examine the place of spirituality in the educative processes within these disciplines; hence, it was decided to focus on just these two faculties, within the University of Tasmania.

1.3 Aims of the Research

This study aims to:

1. Identify what the literature claims are the differences and commonalities between spirituality and religion;
2. Explore how the concept of spirituality is viewed by the academics of the faculties of Business and Education at University of Tasmania;
3. Explore whether spirituality or the concepts associated with it could be incorporated within the university's curriculum;

4. Explore academics' viewpoints on pedagogical approaches that could be used to teach spirituality; and
5. Investigate academics' perception of the role spirituality could play in the development of the professional identities of graduates emerging from their faculties.

1.4 The Research Questions

1. How do academics within the faculties of education and business view the concept of spirituality?
2. How do these academics perceive the incorporation of spirituality within their respective curricula and its role in the development of the professional identities of their students?

1.5 The Situational Context

While there are a number of educational institutions present in the Australian island state of Tasmania, the University of Tasmania is the only higher education degree-awarding university. This gives it a unique cultural and educational significance. According to Research Data Australia (2017), the University of Tasmania is recognised as an international leader, ranked in the top 2% of universities in the world with a reputation for excellence in research and teaching by the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU). The University of Tasmania offers a wide range of courses and programs, both at undergraduate and post-graduate levels, through its various faculties, including the Faculty of Education (FoE) and the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE). These two faculties are spread over all three campuses within Tasmania, and campuses in Sydney, and have a

strong online presence. The University of Tasmania has diverse student and staff cohorts and a multicultural environment, catering to local and international students. All students, irrespective of their faculty, are expected to develop their professional skills, and acquire graduate attributes that they would carry to their workplace (University of Tasmania, 2014).

1.6 Background to the Problem

King (1947) states that education has a dual function in society: the first is enabling humans to be useful and efficient, and the other is developing a culture where everyone is able to achieve their legitimate goals in life. Students enter higher education to develop knowledge, skills, and abilities required by their chosen professions, and seek their place in the world, with a sense of purpose (Trott, 2013). For the teaching profession, the globalised and diverse classroom presents challenges, as students come from varied backgrounds, ethnicities, religious beliefs, and cultures (Natsis, 2016). This requires pre-service teachers to be trained to provide a holistic approach towards teaching and learning, which also includes spiritual aspects (Crossman, 2009). While government documents require teachers to also focus on students' spiritual wellbeing, it is unclear whether teachers within the classroom explore the concept with their students. Crossman (2009, p. 245) states, "implementing a spiritualized curriculum involves making decisions around teaching about spirituality as well as teaching with spirituality." Teaching spirituality and concepts associated with it requires courage, sensitivity, care, talent, and the ability to connect with students at a deep level (Palmer, 1998). This enables students not only to build their knowledge and skills, but also cultivates a bond of trust (Trott, 2013) in a safe environment (Crossman, 2009). Crossman (2009) says many students feel

frustrated when they enter their workplace professionally, because they are unable to find meaning and purpose due to the separation of their personal and professional lives, which for some, includes their spirituality.

While Australian society is diverse in terms of spiritual beliefs and teacher education documents briefly address spirituality, there is a need to begin discourses on spirituality and its implications for teacher education (Natsis, 2016). This requires addressing the topic in a sensitive way, focusing on the development of “tolerance and understanding” within the multicultural “educational contexts” for “a sustainable and peaceful future” within Australia (Crossman, 2009, p. 243). March says, “higher education is a vision, not a calculation. It is a commitment, not a choice. Students are not customers; they are acolytes. Teaching is not a job; it is a sacrament” (March, 2003 cited in Trott, 2013, p. 471).

According to McLaughlin (2005), corporate scandals like those at Enron and other ethical dilemmas worldwide, have resulted in a greater concern about ethics and values in the workplace more generally. Employees now spend more time at work, and require “connectedness, meaning, purpose, altruism, virtue, nurturance, and hope in one’s work and at one’s workplace” (Kolodinsky, Giacalone, & Jurkiewicz, 2007, p. 465). Employees seem to be interested in the transcendent aspects of life, and connect spiritual values to business ethics, not just working for monetary gain (Crossman, 2015b).

Crossan, Mazutis, Seijts, and Gandz (2013) assert that top business schools in the US were responsible for creating business leaders who used their knowledge and skills for personal benefit, resulting in ethical and financial corporate scandals that have impacted the world economy. Alajoutsijärvi, Juusola, and Siltaoja (2015, p. 277) stated that “business schools have been accused of playing a major role in the

financial and economic crisis by failing to emphasize ethics and responsibility.”

Bouckaert and Szolnai (2012, p. 503) are of the opinion that the 2008 Global Financial Crisis (GFC) was caused by “a series of psychological irrationalities in the behaviour of players.” These arguments suggest that business schools require modification in their programs. The addition of spirituality to many business courses suggests that the earlier inclusion of ethics topics was not effective enough.

Although businesses are economic in nature, and place high importance on profitability, many organisations are now looking towards developing themselves into spiritual-based organisations, where people are motivated to work in a more holistic work environment that caters to the employees’ needs (Vasconcelos, 2015). Many organisational leaders and executives also seem to be incorporating spiritual values, from various faiths and belief systems, within their management styles, and seem open to their employees’ spiritual needs (Klenke, 2005). This demonstrates a shift in the professional identities of business leaders and managers, which would influence the way employees perform as part of their teams.

With this in mind, the present research focuses on identifying what spirituality means to Australian academics in higher education. It also investigates their views about the pedagogical approaches that they could use to teach the concept, and the role of spirituality in the development of their students’ professional identities.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The rise in interest in spirituality as a concept separate from religion has resulted in significant studies being conducted within higher education (Crossman, 2015b; De Souza, 2016). While Australia is also showing interest, there seems to be a lack of significant research in the area of spirituality and higher education, including

studies with a focus on teacher and business management education. Rogers and Hill (2002) believe that teacher education needs a focus on spirituality, as an important requirement for the holistic development of school children.

While holistic development of the individual is important in education, teachers nowadays face another challenge which makes the inclusion of spirituality imperative in teacher education. According to De Souza (2016), there is an increase in diversity within the classroom, with students having a variety of religious or secular backgrounds, and coming from different cultural settings or races, and exposure to negative ideas has created tensions amongst the students and the stakeholders in educational institutions. This requires pre-service teachers to be equipped with skills and abilities to handle emerging issues, and nurture their students' spirituality (De Souza, 2016).

Some authors suggest that the mismatch between the needs of present day society and the business education curriculum worldwide has resulted in the issues that affected the global economy during the GFC and thus requires transformation (Marques, Dhiman, & Biberman, 2014). Authors have discussed topics like workplace spirituality (Bell-Ellis et al., 2015; Crossman, 2015b), organisational spirituality (Cunha, Rego, & D'Oliveira, 2006), spiritual-based leadership (Pruzan, 2015), and spirituality in project management (Neal, 2013), and suggest their incorporation within the mainstream business education curriculum.

Bouckaert (2015) explains that incorporating spirituality in higher education enables professionals to develop an attitude that allows openness towards unexpected and limitless possibilities, within ethical boundaries and with compassion. Spirituality enables professionals to feel more positive around people and the workplace, and

perform above what is expected of them, as they feel valued and inspired to serve others (Neal, 2013).

The significance of this study is that it provides insight into the similarities and differences among academics' viewpoints around spirituality while exploring its identity distinct from religion. The study also explores the appropriateness of including spirituality with the curriculum and the pedagogical approaches academics think would help them teach the concept. This exploration also enabled academics within the two faculties to ponder whether or not spirituality would be beneficial for their students' professional development, as is being considered and implemented in universities in other countries globally. The results from this study highlight the complexities around the incorporation of spirituality within higher education, and the challenges academics feel need to be addressed before adding another concept or task to the goals of higher education.

1.8 Contribution to the Field

Within the limitations of this study, this thesis contributes to the academic field by:

6. Giving an insight into the way two groups of academics view or understand spirituality, especially within higher education contexts;
7. Offering a springboard to further explore the importance of spirituality in higher education, within other faculties besides education and business;
8. Providing an insight into the assumptions and challenges faced by academia towards incorporating spirituality within higher education;

9. Contributing towards a deeper understanding of the concepts associated with spirituality, and the way they seem to be present within higher education, despite the limited use of the term; and
10. Presenting various pedagogical approaches suggested as appropriate for teaching spirituality.

1.9 Background to My Interest in This Topic

Being a Baha'i by faith, I have always been interested in the topic of spirituality. With a multicultural background and being raised in both the east and the west, I was interested in the way people live their lives. I could see the differences in practices and rituals, and tried to find meaning in them. The process that led me to this research starts with my first real encounter with spirituality in Grade 5, in Switzerland, when the teacher engaged the class in a discourse on the different faiths and religions present in the classroom, and how we were all different, yet similar, and how we connect with each other. As I grew up, my family moved to Pakistan, and encountered the concept of spirituality only in terms of religion, especially in education, and all students were required to study Islam irrespective of their faith. I undertook science as an undergraduate and got interested in the theory of evolution. This led me towards understanding Darwinism, making me question religion and spirituality. Consequently, I began my search after the truth and studied the various religions and their holy scriptures. During this time, I also met with people who had no belief system, but considered themselves spiritual beings, who talked about the same things that religious people did, without the discussion about God and the organizational structures and rituals associated with religions.

Getting into the workforce during my education helped me gain an insight into issues within organizations, management, and employees, both within the education and corporate systems. This enabled me to understand and identify the ethical implications of specific behaviours and mindsets within the workplace environment. Starting my career as a young performing artist, I observed that, over the years, there was a decline in the way most artists and other professionals in the industry followed the ethical principles laid down in the field, resulting in ever-increasing ethical dilemmas faced in the quest to gain fame. Moreover, the dichotomies of being religious on one side, and committing things that were forbidden in their faiths for worldly fame on the other, truly intrigued me.

Later in life, for my first postgraduate degree, I enrolled in a Catholic university, and, coincidentally that year, all students observed their religious fasting period together. The observances of spiritual nature and festivities around them united everyone and it was interesting to see how well we all connected despite our different beliefs. That year Easter (Christianity), Naw-Ruz (Baha'i), Eid-ul-Fitr (Islam), Passover (Judaism), and Holi (Hinduism) were celebrated approximately at the same time. That experience rekindled my interest in spirituality and its difference from religion.

After completing my degree, I re-joined the workforce and taught at the school level, then college, and finally higher education. Within academic circles, too, I found numerous ethical issues that these institutions were trying to address, at times successfully, while failing at others. Opportunities to work in various multinational corporations enabled me to head various departments, especially in compliance, helping me understand the cause of the ethical dilemmas and corporate scandals that affected the global environment. While working at one of the multinational

organizations, a major earthquake hit the region, and it was interesting to observe the interconnectedness amongst people, not known to each other, demonstrated by reaching out through prayers, collecting donations, visiting, and helping via their corporate social responsibility program. Some literature associates these practices with workplace spirituality (Bubna-Litic, 2009).

I was also involved in training employees both within my workplace and other organizations, especially in the field of ethics, management, and soft skills—or the ability to manage oneself and others. Training employees encouraged me to quit my job and start my own consultancy for learning and development, working for both academic and corporate entities, in the area of organizational development. As my consultancy was Baha'i inspired, it incorporated concepts associated with spirituality in its ethos and the training programs it offered. Some of these programs included types of leadership, emotional intelligence, and personal development, and were developed in consensus with the organisational managers as per their specific requirements. Interestingly, the employees attending these training programs came from different cultures and religious backgrounds, yet were able to identify with the concepts, and build strong connections amongst themselves. Participants in these training programs felt that these concepts could have benefitted them earlier had they been included in their universities' curricula, with follow-up programs later on.

As a volunteer, I have also been involved as a tutor in an international spiritual-based adult literacy program, used in different parts of the world. This program enables the participants of the program to develop deeper thinking skills by enabling them to reflect on various aspects of life. This made me reflect on the various educational systems that I had experienced over the years. In most systems, students are taught to develop knowledge and skills, without contemplating the deeper

meaning within that knowledge base. In another education system, that I encountered, religion was enforced and was mandatory, irrespective of students' belief systems. Students were forced to memorise text and sit in an exam, the answers for which were provided beforehand, and students were expected to memorise them. Religion was considered a scoring subject which encouraged non-Muslims to sit for the exam too, without having in-depth understanding of the meaning associated with the concepts that were taught. The curiosity to find a solution to the many issues around education and business led me to the relatively new concept of spirituality being different from religion. This led me to investigate the concept, with the aim of understanding its scope and viability for enabling students to develop professional identities.

1.10 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into eight chapters. The basic structure is that Chapters 1, 2, and 3 present the introduction, literature review, methodology, and data analysis. Chapters 4 to 6 are thematic, each with a topic arising from analysis of the data collected. Each chapter is divided into themes and sub-themes that present the findings from each faculty, ending with a comparative analysis and discussion of the data from the two faculties. Chapter 7 brings together the themes of the whole thesis and presents the conclusions and implications arising from this study. These include the findings, the challenges and implications for future study.

1.10.1 Key Terminologies and Abbreviations:

UTas: University of Tasmania

FoE: Faculty of Education

TSBE: Tasmanian School of Business and Economics

Religious: Having any form of religious affiliation; may or may not be practicing

Non-Religious: Not believing in any religion but may have some form of a belief system, which may be secular or agnostic (unsure of the existence of God or religion)

Atheist: Person who does not believe in God

Management Position: A higher management or leadership role in an academic faculty

International: Academic having origins other than Australia

Participant or Academic: Faculty member involved in this study; used interchangeably

Chapter 2

Literature Review

*Spirituality and ethics are core values that have shaped human life
from time immemorial.*

Mahadevan, (2013, p. 91)

2.1 Introduction

Globally, societies today are influenced by a number of factors, some being political or social in nature. Many seem to encourage a material focus on personal benefit, with an accompanying human disconnectedness, resulting in ethical and moral dilemmas (Vasconcelos, 2015). It appears that despite ethics education within universities, and codes of ethics in place within the workplace and society, the number of ethical and moral dilemmas seems to be growing (Tang, 2010). These dilemmas have raised concern amongst people such as educationalists, teachers, parents, and other members of society at large (De Souza, 2012). As a result, people are seeking solutions to not only help mitigate the occurrence of ethical and moral dilemmas, but also develop a sense of meaning, purpose and connectedness amongst individuals and the society (Tang, 2010; Klenke, 2005). Ashmos and Duchon (2000)

explain that people want to be connected with their own “spirit”, which “means life” (p. 136) and that everyone, whether religious or secular, has “an inner life” (p. 135) that provides meaning and purpose to individuals within society and at work. Ideas such as these led researchers to study the concept of spirituality as a possible solution that might enable people to behave more ethically. The Office of Social Economic Department at the Bahá’í World Centre (OSED) (1994) suggests that any crisis that occurs in any region of the world—be it environmental, socio-political, ethical, religious or spiritual—affects the global society in one way or another and requires a vision or solutions that are world-embracing (OSED, 1994).

Since the 1990s, there seems to be a growing interest in spirituality as a concept separate from religion, and many ongoing studies are seeking to understand the nature and importance of spirituality in a number of areas, including higher education. Most of these studies have been carried out in countries like the USA, UK, India (De Souza, 2012), and China (Ng & Lu, 2015), with very few within Australia. Based in Australia, this present study explores the concept of spirituality, and its role in higher education and the development of students’ professional identities, within one university’s faculties of Education and Business. Within this context, this chapter focuses on the literature that establishes the basis for this study and informs the two research questions.

1. How do academics within the faculties of education and business view the concept of spirituality?
2. How do these academics perceive the incorporation of spirituality within their respective curricula and its role in the development of the professional identities of their students?

To begin with, this chapter will consider the issues in the first research question by introducing spirituality, then giving a brief history of spirituality, leading to various definitions and viewpoints around defining spirituality. This will be followed by the background of this study, and a discussion on religious and secular spirituality. Later sections will consider the issues in the second research question, and discuss the role of spirituality in higher education, focusing on the curricula, concepts associated with spirituality in higher education, pedagogical approaches to teaching spirituality, and the impact of teaching spirituality on the development of professional identities of education and business graduates.

2.2 Spirituality

Throughout history, spirituality was associated with religion and was only distinguished from it with the rise of secularism in the twentieth century (Zinnbauer, et al., 1997). Pargament (2013) believes that in the twenty-first century, religion and spirituality are still very influential worldwide. Over the years, numerous studies have been conducted in an attempt to understand the relationship between religion and spirituality, and how they differ from each other. According to Garcia-Zamor (2003), some empirical studies suggest that spirituality is a part of religion and cannot be separated from it, while others suggest that spirituality is a relatively new concept that may or may not be influenced by religion, but has its own separate identity (Borges, Santos, & Pinheiro, 2015; Garcia-Zamor, 2003). To understand spirituality, a concept that was once purely religious but now has its own separate identity, requires some understanding of the history of spirituality.

2.3 A Brief History of Spirituality

Spirituality is a difficult concept to define and understand. To put it in context for this study, it is imperative to explore the history of the ideas behind spirituality and the evolution of its usage today.

The word “spirituality” has been part of the theological vocabulary for centuries, dating back to the thirteenth century (Sheldrake, 2007) or even before, in one of Paul’s letters in the Christian New Testament (McLean, 1994; Sheldrake, 2007). It was used as an adjective to denote a person who lived with the “Spirit of God” in a “supra-material sense”, or beyond the tangible sense of being, until the thirteenth century (Sheldrake, 2007, p. 3). Over the centuries the word “spirituality” evolved into a noun, and was used in a negative way and its use in theology disappeared around the seventeenth century, before re-emerging in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century within French theology in a positive way (Sheldrake, 2007).

After the Second World War, French scholars undertook the first serious work on the topic of spirituality, as a concept different from religion. These scholars advocated the use of prayer and meditation, and encouraged spirituality in the professional practices of psychologists, academics, and health care professionals, but without the religious rituals (McLean, 1994) or association with any specific religious denomination.

The 1960s saw the introduction of spirituality into higher education as a separate concept, where the original works done earlier by the French scholars were translated into English in an attempt to explore the concept in detail (McLean, 1994; Sheldrake, 2007). Eventually, the word “spirituality” replaced words used in religious

theology such as “mystical life”, “piety”, and “life of the soul” (McLean, 1994, p.211). There has since been a focus on spirituality in education, and it was introduced into business education in the 1980s, within ethics and philosophy (McLean, 1994). In recent times, spirituality has evolved as a concept arising from religion, but having a separate and distinct identity (Cafferky, 2012; Hodge, 2001), resulting in an increase in scholarly work during the 1990s, which gathered further momentum in the early years of the new millennium. The work on spirituality produced during this time identified topics that could improve the workplace environment as well, some of which are used in psychology, philosophy, and sociology. These include intrinsic motivation, spiritual leadership, interconnectedness, self-chosen simplicity and moderation, and public happiness (Bouckaert, 2011; McLean, 1994). These ideas have been taught in educational institutions in various disciplines since then, in an attempt to develop students’ spirituality.

2.4 Defining Spirituality

Numerous attempts have been made to define spirituality outside theological contexts (Natsis, 2016), as there are people who look at spirituality as separate from religion and consider themselves spiritual but not religious (Buxton, 2016). To pursue research in the area it is important to clarify the different meanings and definitions available in literature while using the term spirituality within the context of this study. The word “spiritual” has been given numerous meanings in varying contexts, making the word “spirituality” difficult to define definitively (McLean, 1994). Rowson (2014, p. 14) elaborates that “Some words are easy to define and operationalise, some are hard to define and operationalise, and some should not be defined or operationalised

at all.” He further adds, “The point is not that you *cannot* define spirituality, because many have; rather, the question is whether you *should*” (Rowson, 2014, p. 14).

Although there are many academic definitions of spirituality, there seems to be no standard academic definition that is not contested or debated by other experts in the field of spirituality. As a result, no specific definition was used for this study, although a few definitions that demonstrate the wide range of meanings and concepts associated with spirituality have been selected and presented in this literature review. These are listed below and will be discussed further.

1. “Spirituality is defined as that which gives us meaning and purpose in life and which connects us to something greater than ourselves” (Neal, 2013, p. 12).
2. “Spirituality is broader in scope [than religion], and includes not only religion but also the essence of life. This is more difficult to define because it is intangible, but generally, spirituality includes the inner forces that give purpose to physical life. For some, religion is a component of spirituality; however, individuals may have no religious affiliation yet be very spiritual” (Ondeck, 2002, p. 231).
3. “Spirituality is defined as the experiences and expressions of one’s spirit in a unique and dynamic process reflecting faith in God or a supreme being; a connectedness with oneself, others, nature or God; and an integration of the dimensions of mind, body, and spirit” (Meraviglia, 1999, p. 18).
4. “Spirituality offers a range of connections—to oneself, others, organisations, a higher being—that may shift over the course of an individual’s life-time” (Buzzanell, 2009, p. 17).

5. Spirituality is “The basic feeling of being connected with one’s complete self, others and the entire universe” (Mitroff & Denton, 1999, p. 83).
6. “Spirituality refers to the deepest values and meanings by which people seek to live” (Sheldrake, 2007, p. 1).
7. “Spirituality is an internal way of knowing and a holistic way of being” (Allison & Broadus, 2009, p. 77).
8. Contemporary spirituality “is holistic and primarily concerned with the sacred—a quest for meaning, development of the spirit, and ultimate values” (Ridge, 2015, p. 213).
9. It [spirituality] means engaging the world from a foundation of meaning and values. It pertains to our hopes and dreams, our patterns of thought, our emotions, feelings and behaviours (Turner, 1999, cited in Garcia-Zamor, 2003, p. 356).
10. Spirituality is “An innate, human characteristic that allows us to connect with transcendence and/or the divine and feel part of the universe.

Spirituality thus encompasses the individual capacity and the essence of life, providing humans with a greater consciousness and more profound understanding of being” (Mata, 2014, p. 114).
11. “Spirituality is more about how people make meaning through experience with wholeness, a perceived higher power, or higher purpose” (Tisdell, 2003, p. 47).
12. Spirituality could be tied to “everything, from an internal compass, to community, to powers emanating from ecological resources” (Hendrix & Hamlet, 2009, p. 4).

The common themes found in the twelve definitions above suggest that spirituality is about meaning and purpose in life, and focuses on connecting with others, the self, a higher power or God, and that it is holistic in nature. Some definitions also seem to suggest that spirituality could be everywhere, broadening its appeal for a wide range of people. Additionally, one definition provided by Rowson (2014) who has sought to define spirituality rigorously, presents the notion of change in spirituality as people's connections with others change. Rowson, (2014, p. 18) explains this variance:

The capacious term “spirituality” lacks clarity because it is not so much a unitary concept as a signpost for a range of touchstones; our search for meaning, our sense of the sacred, the value of compassion, the experience of transcendence, the hunger for transformation. In all of these dimensions, there is scope for flex and change, and spirituality remains a moving feast. (p. 18)

While the above definitions of spirituality are very specific to their authors, literature also reveals additional aspects of spirituality discussed by others. Brunal (2011), Tolliver and Tisdell (2002), and McLean (1994) state that spirituality is complicated in nature as it can be personal and different for each individual, experience-based, cultural, and multilayered within a community system. McLean (1994) describes spirituality as the essence of any individual which defines the real self and helps develop inner values and morality.

Mahadevan (2013) asserts that spirituality is based on three basic foundations of faith, love, and knowledge that build up life in itself, while Tolliver and Tisdell (2002) believe in connection with oneself and others, or with “God” or “ultimate reality” or “the source of life” (Bouckaert & Zsolnai, 2012; McLean, 1994) or

“transcendence” (Vasconcelos, 2015), something greater than oneself. According to Benefiel, Fry, and Geigle (2014), spirituality is about living “a holistic life that integrates, among other things, faith and work” (p. 177), and is focused on interconnectedness with everything (Thompson, 2011).

2.4.1 Ethics, Morals, Values and Spirituality

The literature also suggests that the concepts of ethics, values, morals, and spirituality are, at least, interlinked and may have been used interchangeably by some (McLaughlin, 2005) despite the subtle differences among them. The word “ethics” is derived from the Greek word “ethos”, meaning custom or habit, and the concept helps characterize the way individuals lead their lives (Galbraith & Webb, 2010). Alexander (2006) suggests that ethics is about living a “good life” (p. 329) that is morally bound. Fry (2005) elaborates,

Ethics is primarily concerned with exploring the question of what are the values and principles of morally good behaviour, of what is “the good life” in terms of happiness and wellbeing, and providing justification for the sort of contexts that might help insure morally good decisions. (p. 3)

Values are desirable, trans-situational or changeable goals, that serve as guiding principles in people’s lives by exerting internal pressure to behave in a certain way (Crossan, et al., 2013, p. 571). Values enable people to select their “attitudes and behaviours” towards others (Rohan, 2000) and provide them with meaning and purpose in life (Zhang, Hui, Lam, Lau, Cheung, & Mok et al., 2014). According to Mudge, Fleming, and Lovat (2014), people who engage with others using the values

of “compassion, openness, and tolerance” (p. 147), are able to build “synergistic relationships” (p. 149) with them.

Morals are the attitudinal norms that influence the way individuals lead their lives and interact with others within specific ethics and value systems (Traiser & Eighmy, 2011). They involve doing the right thing towards others, focusing on societal norms (Alexander, 2006).

Because of their similar characteristics, it seems that when defining spirituality people may also discuss ethics, values, and morals interchangeably. The reason for this could be that all four concepts enable people to look inwards, and provide guidance for living a life that requires connection and consideration towards the self and others.

2.5 Background to the Study

The failure of ethics education to mitigate ethical dilemmas has impacted almost all spheres of life globally. As discussed in section 1.1, spirituality has been researched as a possible solution to address the concerns of the various stakeholders within society. This study continues to explore the concept of spirituality and its perceived value within higher education as suggested in literature by Crossman (2015a, b), Bell-Ellis et al. (2015), Lindholm and Astin (2008), Neal (2008), and Taplin (2014).

A study by Ma (2006) revealed that society’s attention on consumerism and competitive gain has led higher education to become focused on the material aspects of education. This has encouraged students to attempt only to achieve high scores without considering the major impact their actions may have on others. This is evidenced by global economic disruptions, such as the Enron Scandal and the Global

Financial Crisis (GFC), which have been attributed to graduates from top-ranking universities (Marques et al., 2014). Besides these, there are numerous societal problems such as “racial tension, drug cultures, family issues, and an obsession with materialism” (Crossman, 2009, p. 237) that need to be addressed in higher education. Trott (2013) asserts that higher education must now provide the knowledge, skills, and abilities required by students choosing any profession, enabling them to transform themselves into holistically developed professionals—professionals who are in touch with their mind, body, and spirit, and are able to connect with others (Taplin, 2014).

The growing number of ethical dilemmas and poor decisions in various professions (Mahadevan, 2013) has compelled organisations to seek to employ professionals with higher ethical and moral standards, who are capable of applying those standards within their organizations (Cunha et al., 2006; Miller, 2009). Cunha et al. (2006) further assert that organisations worldwide—irrespective of economic standing or nature, or whether they are academic or corporate—are going through major reorganization and change, and expect their employees to be able to build relationships with others by considering them as “integral human beings” and “responding to their material and immaterial needs”, which includes their spiritual needs (Cunha et al., 2006, p. 212). To address these needs, the higher education curriculum requires modification and perhaps a solution involving the concept of spirituality is worthy of exploration.

2.6 Spirituality: Religious versus Secular Spirituality

As discussed above, spirituality has evolved from religion, and, despite distinctions, they are not completely divorced from each other, and are at times used

interchangeably. To distinguish between spirituality and religion, it is important to understand the origin of these words. “Religion” is derived from Latin and originates from the word “religio”, which means “good faith ritual”, and “involves universal life experiences and the meaning attached to these experiences” (Allison & Broadus, 2009, p. 77). Secular on the other hand is derived from the Latin word “saeculum” which means “generation, age, used in Christian Latin to mean ‘the world’ as opposed to the church” (Oxford Dictionary, 2018). The idea of “spirituality” is evident in many languages, for example in “Latin spirare or spiritus, Greek pneuma, Hebrew ruach and Sanskrit prana” (Copenhaver, 2013, p. 43), which have the same meaning for the words “breath” and “spirit”. This separation is further clarified by Zsolnai (2004, p. 3) who explains that spirituality is not the same thing as religion, as spirituality is about the “search for meaning that transcends material well-being” and focuses on “basic, deep-rooted human values, and a relationship with a universal source, power or divinity”. He asserts that religions bring out that spiritual essence through practices and rituals. Similarly, Mulder (2014, p. 17) explains that “spirituality extends beyond religion, and includes broader concepts such as meaning, purpose, hope, and relationships with others and a higher power”, while religion is concerned with behaviours and practices, both individually and collectively, within an organised structure, and may include worship, services, study of religious texts, and prayer (Mulder, 2014).

In general terms, it can be said that religion is a practice of rituals and rites as per the prerequisites of a faith-based organisation or community, with specific codes of conduct that focus on hierarchical relationships with the sacred (Bouckaert, 2011). Spirituality, on the other hand, is broader in scope than religion, and is an individual’s personal experience with what he or she considers sanctified, and can be experienced

everywhere (Tisdell, 2008; Ondeck, 2002). Narayanswamy (2008) uses the analogy of a coconut to explain this distinction, stating that the outer shell is religion and the sweet nectar inside is spirituality. In other words, religion is the outer shape and structure that protects and helps develop spirituality, through prayer and other acts (Huber & MacDonald, 2012). Both are interconnected but are separate with distinct identities.

A brief discussion on two specific religious spiritualities, Christianity and Baha'i, is presented below. The reason for these discussions is that although various belief systems are present in Australia, Christianity seems to influence various aspects of Australian life—with 52 percent (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016) of Australians identifying with it—while the Baha'i Faith influenced my own personal understanding of spirituality.

2.6.1 Christian Spirituality

While there are many denominations in Christianity, a general overview of aspects common to all is presented in this section. Christian spirituality relates to following Jesus Christ and His teachings (Sheldrake, 2013). According to Avakian (2015, p. 67), “Christian spirituality by its very nature is about bringing one’s own will into harmony with the will of God. This calls for humbleness, sacrifice and even suffering”. Lavalley (2016), Crisp (2009), and Sheldrake (2013) suggest that spirituality within a Christian context mainly focuses on the Holy Spirit and the lived experiences of the members of the faith in relation to the world. Faesen (2016, p. 105) cites the Bible in saying that “the only thing that really matters is to love God, with all one’s heart, all one’s soul and all one’s mind, and this can only be done by loving one’s neighbour as oneself (Matthew 22:36–39)”.

Christian spirituality teaches values and practices that could best help transform the human identity and the material world to a transcendent, and God-loving world (Crisp, 2009; Sheldrake, 2013). It is also about consciously integrating life and its activities through “self-transcendence toward the ultimate value one perceives” (Perrin, 2007, p. 31). The word “transcendence” is used within the contexts of the relationship between God and an individual, and is associated with “a power beyond the individual” (Roof, 2014) and “is rooted in meaning, a quality fundamental to human consciousness and spirituality” (Palmer, 2010, p. 158).

2.6.2 Baha’i Spirituality

The Baha’i Faith’s view of spirituality is very similar to Christian spirituality. McLean (1994) explains that spirituality within the Baha’i Faith is seen in diverse contexts, such as the immortality of the soul, virtues, and a belief in God, is grounded in the Baha’i writings, and generally operates at a deeper level of understanding and intuition, than just what is visible. The Exemplar of the Baha’i Faith, Abdu’l-Bahá, explains, “Spirituality is the greatest of God’s gifts” (2009b, p. 94), and a means to turn to God to obtain everlasting life. He further elaborates, “True spirituality is like unto a lake of clear water which reflects the divine” (Abdu’l-Bahá, 2009a, p. 100), and requires actions to develop those divine attributes which are reflected in a human being’s higher nature, such as “love, mercy, kindness, truth, and justice” (Abdu’l-Bahá, 2009b, p. 47). Baha’i spirituality focuses on the development of humanity by living in the material world yet not being too attached to material things, and being happy with whatever happens in life. This requires a virtuous life, with a humble attitude towards God, being in constant prayer, and giving service to humanity.

There are a number of similarities between Christian and Baha'i spiritualities in that both believe in loving the transcendent God, accepting His will, and following the Holy Scriptures. Both religious spiritualities also expect their followers to be virtuous in all matters of life and be self-transcending, humble, and kind.

2.6.3 Secular Spirituality

While a large population still advocate that the road to spirituality is only through religion, there are others who have moved away from organised religion (Hill et al., 2000; Mulder, 2014) and some argue that individuals can be spiritual without being part of any religion (Neal, 2008; Ondeck, 2002). To understand how spirituality can be dissociated from religion, we need to look at the concept of secular spirituality.

According to Feldmeier (2016, p. 22), “the term ‘spiritual but not religious’” emerged as people became “disenfranchised with institutional religion” (p. 22), but still needed connection and meaning in their lives. Meehan (2002, cited in Grajczonek, 2010) explains, “secular spirituality seeks to find meaning and purpose in universal human experience rather than religious experience per se,” and is concerned with “wholeness, connectedness or relationship with oneself, with others, with nature or the world, but not necessarily with God or an Ultimate” (Grajczonek, 2010, p. 5). Nonetheless, defining spirituality in secular terms has always been challenging (McLean, 1994), as some concepts like connectedness, meaning, and purpose seem to overlap religion, and the perceptions of spirituality vary greatly, depending on individual experiences (Crossman, 2003).

Secular spirituality is a personal experience of what an individual considers sanctified and can be experienced everywhere, at any time (Bouckaert & Zsolnai, 2012; Tisdell, 2008). Crossman (2003, p. 505) explains that secular spirituality

“appears to be something of an oxymoron in that the secular cannot, strictly speaking, be spiritual in nature. [...] The concept of secular spirituality has a generalisable and trans-religious quality, emphasising obvious commonalities amongst major religions without undue preference.” Individuals can find spirituality everywhere, “in the mystical and the mundane, the scientific and the irrational, the therapeutic and the pedagogical, the personal and the universal” (King, 2007, p.105), which can also create a sense of awe and wonder amongst individuals (Fischer, 2011).

Some of the common concepts secular spirituality uses from major world religions pertain to “moral sensibility, creativity, love and friendship, response to natural and human beauty, scientific and artistic endeavour, appreciation and wonder at the natural world” (Grajczonek, 2010). These definitions and explanations suggest that, unlike religious spirituality, secular spirituality depends on an individual’s experiences, perceptions, and understanding of what one may consider sanctified or not, and yet it also inculcates many ideas and concepts from religious spirituality.

Secular spirituality is an emerging concept that is dissociated from traditional religious practices; it refers to the individualised development of a more humane self (Natsis, 2016). While religion and spirituality seem to have separate identities, secular spirituality has emerged from the concepts associated with religion and shares similar terminologies. The difference between religious and secular spirituality is that the first focuses on a Deity or God within an organised system of rituals and practices, with specific goals and meaning within a community (Feldmeier, 2016). Secular spirituality, on the other hand, dissociates itself from organised religion and is much more individualised (Crossman, 2003). Nonetheless, both religious and secular spirituality focus on the meaning of life, purpose, and interconnectedness. Spirituality within religious contexts has been easier to define, using the specific belief systems it

is associated with, but defining secular spirituality has been a challenge since its inception (McLean, 1994). The greater challenge remains with developing an academic and commonly understood definition of spirituality that is not contestable.

2.7 Spirituality in Higher Education

The search of the literature to clarify the concept of spirituality, for the first research question, has revealed that spirituality is challenging to define. The recency of the concept has led to growth in research in the area of spirituality in higher education, but with limited work within Australia. This leads to the second research question that explores the issues around the incorporation of spirituality in higher education with the education and business faculties, and its impact on the development of the professional identities of students; this section will review the literature in the area of spirituality in higher education.

Abdu'l-Bahá (cited in Lample, 2010, p. 59) says, “Education cannot alter the inner essence of a man, but it doth exert tremendous influence, and with this power, it can bring forth from the individual whatever perfections and capacities are deposited within him.” To understand the role higher education plays in the development of human capacities, it is important to understand the history of education, and what it means in terms of higher education.

Education is a word derived from the Latin *educare*, which “means to draw out” (Hodge & Derezotes, 2008, p. 112). It empowers people to choose a life that fulfils their purpose meaningfully, enabling them to understand the mutual interdependence amongst people and the environment (Kelly, 2007).

Historically, human behaviour evolved from within the institutions of family and religion that set out rules and regulations defining the virtuous character expected

of individuals within society (Fry, 2005). As humanity began to move towards a more systematic way of life, education was formalised (Heath, 2000), and educational institutions were bestowed with the task of developing virtuous and moral human beings (Fry, 2005). The educational system thus assumed the primary role of providing students with a sense of community, and teaching the moral and civic values expected by society (Purpel, 1989).

While enabling individuals to develop personalities that would foster community building, competition in the job market modified the role of institutionalised education to provide basic skills that could help people get jobs (Bereiter, 1972). Although the ideals of education have always been high and somewhat utopian, education is also supposed to be realistic and practical. Within educational structures, despite the varying capacities to learn, there is a possibility to educate individuals with a view of attaining common good for all (Abdu'l-Bahá, 2010). This requires individuals to develop virtues and attitudes like tolerance, trustworthiness, love, and freedom from prejudice, which can be developed through acculturation within an educational system (Lample, 2010).

Incorporating these spiritual values and virtues within higher education can create a learning environment that develops professionals with ethically well-grounded and wise decision-making skills (Frohlich, 2001; Rego & Cunha, 2008; Tisdell, 2008), who are able to adjust more readily to the rapidly changing workplace environment (Tisdell, 2008) where employees come from varied backgrounds and have different needs (Rego & Cunha, 2008).

There seems to be a need for holistic education within society (Buchanan, 2010; De Souza, 2016; Podger, 2009), which “is concerned with life experience, not

with narrowly defined ‘basic skills’” and gives meaning to everything in the universe (Mahmoudi, Jafari, Nasrabadi, & Liaghatdar, 2012, p. 178). Ng and Lu (2015) state

Holistic education attempts to nurture the development of the whole person, to foster connections between the inner life and outer life, and to keep a harmonious balance between the intra and inter-personal relationships. It also works for different levels of wholeness, in community, in society, in the planet as well as in the cosmos. (p. 20)

Incorporating spirituality in higher education using a holistic approach may enable students to develop into well-rounded professionals (Mahmoudi et al., 2012) by drawing out their sense of community, and interconnectedness with themselves and the transcendent (Hodge & Derezotes, 2008). Perhaps, these professionals would be able to work for the betterment of the global society in a spirit of service (Baha’i International Community (BIC), 2010) as productive members of society having spiritual awareness (Radford, 2006).

2.8 Spirituality and the Higher Education Curriculum

“Education is the foundation of a skilled workforce and a creative community” (Australian Government, 2016, p. 1). Spirituality empowers people to become the best they can be by enabling them to learn about moral principles, community building (Lindholm & Astin, 2008; Welch & Koth, 2013), and communal living (Priestley, 1997). Communal living is about living and working as a team, and facilitates community building (Priestley, 1997), by enabling people to interconnect, and providing opportunities for service to others, which gives meaning and purpose in

peoples' lives (Welch & Koth, 2013). Perhaps this is the reason why spirituality is important to include within the curriculum.

To incorporate spirituality within higher education, institutions would need to review their mission and explore the role spirituality may play in producing lifelong learners (Woodard et al., 2000). Similarly, higher education scholars and academics would need to revisit their curricula, and identify areas where spirituality could be incorporated (Harris & Crossman, 2005), implicitly or explicitly.

Priestley (1997) explains that curriculum and education are not synonymous, yet they have been used interchangeably within education. He describes education as a big Roman arena, in which the curriculum, a small but important part, is run like a chariot. The curriculum is what is visible and concrete, while everything else that is intangible and associated with education falls in the category of the hidden curriculum (Priestley, 1997).

According to Purpel (1989), a hidden or tacit curriculum represents “the values, attitudes, and assumptions toward learning and human relationships” (p. 20) that are practiced within an educational setting. For example, students implicitly learn about institutional values such as timeliness, neatness, and discipline, and social norms such as independence, and valuing each other and the self (Çobanoğlu & Engin Demir, 2014). This implies that the hidden curriculum could be addressing some of the concepts associated with spirituality even if educational institutions may not ascribe to spirituality directly. For example, a course's content may not discuss spirituality, yet some educators may “embrace a spiritual element in their teaching and learning relationships” (Harris & Crossman, 2005, p. 4), to enhance student learning tacitly.

Incorporating spirituality within the curriculum poses the question of measuring student learning outcomes through assessment tasks. “The purpose of assessment is to improve [student performance] and provide evidence that the results have been used for decision-making and improvement of student outcomes” (Ohia, 2011, p. 29). Universities are generally focused on specific learning outcomes that can be measured objectively, especially as they cater to large cohorts of students who have to be assessed within a limited time frame (Waddock & Lozano, 2013). Therefore, some academics “feel that spirituality is too subjective to be of value in the objective, empirical world of academia” (Laurence, 1999, p. 4), and the learning outcomes for spirituality would need to be measured subjectively. Qualitative assessment approaches that are “holistic, open ended, individualistic, ideographic and process oriented” could be appropriate to assess students’ learning of spirituality (Hodge, 2001, p. 204). That is, approaches that use symbols and focus on processes rather than outcomes, and would allow students a certain freedom of expression (Hodge, 2001).

Curriculum development is challenging, especially when trying to incorporate something as new as spirituality within the learning framework in higher education, and doing so requires great wisdom and care (Lindholm & Astin, 2008). Sharma and Arbuckle (2010) assert that most values, virtues, and attributes associated with spirituality are common amongst all major religious and secular factions of society, and could facilitate incorporating spirituality into the curriculum. Some of these suggested by Brussat and Brussat (2017) are “attention, beauty, compassion, connections, enthusiasm, hope and love.” Waddock and Lozano (2013) suggest that rather than including spirituality in higher education within various disciplines, it

should be possible to integrate it throughout the curriculum, to provide a holistic understanding of the concept.

The idea of incorporating spirituality within the higher education curriculum is not yet fully accepted, mainly because the concept is considered a “cultural taboo” and “flaky” and looked down upon, especially within academia (Tisdell, 2008, p. 27), and its personal nature makes it immeasurable (Illes, 2015). Nonetheless, there are numerous ongoing discourses about its importance in higher education, within academic circles the world over (Tisdell, 2008). Rubin (2017) is of the opinion that there is a need to redesign the higher education curriculum, globally making it more relevant to the requirements of today’s society, which must include character qualities. He describes *character* as “how one behaves and engages in the world” (p. 19).

There are many universities that have successfully incorporated spirituality within their curricula (Frohlich, 2001; Groen, 2008; Hogan, 2009), and countries like the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and China have already started work in the area of holistic education, with a focus on spirituality for religious and non-religious students (Ng & Lu, 2015). Some courses that have already been taught successfully at the university level include applied spirituality in Ireland (Flanagan, 2011), spirituality and moral leadership in Canada (Groen, 2008), and, in the USA, spirituality and leadership (Harris & Crossman, 2005), and spirituality in the workplace (Marques et al., 2014). Within Australia, “magic, spirituality and religion” (University of Tasmania, 2017), “studies in spirituality” (University of Newcastle, 2017), and “spirituality, wisdom and aesthetics” (University of South Australia, 2014) have been found as teaching units, although not specifically within the areas of education or business. The University of South Australia has discontinued teaching its

unit, the reasons for which are unknown. Nonetheless, interest in teaching spirituality within higher education seems to be present within Australia, within the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. By gaining insights into how these programs operate within these universities, other higher education institutions could develop courses and methods to teach the concept of spirituality within various disciplines, and contribute to the academic world by sharing their experiences.

To understand the importance of spirituality in higher education, specifically within the context of this study which focuses on the faculties of education and business, a more specific review of literature is required. It may be noted that while graduates emerging from the faculty of education are mostly school teachers, there may be other professional educators also graduating from the faculty. Nonetheless, the main focus is on pre-service teachers for this review. Similarly, graduates from the faculty of business could be professionals in varying contexts, and the general assumption for this study would be that they are business or management graduates.

2.9 Spirituality and Teacher Education

While the spiritual and material aspects of human nature are intertwined, society seems to focus only on the material and not so much on the spiritual needs of people (Rolph & Rolph, 2011). This is reflected in an increasing government and public demand on aspects of education such as “exams, tests, behavioural objectives, technical teaching, emotionless pedagogy, and standards-based education” (Tucker, 2010, p. 6).

Rogers and Hill (2002) explain that, within Australia, the word spirituality is used to mean anything from religion to non-religious philosophies, such as “New Age spirituality” and “Aboriginal Spirituality” (p. 274). They assert that these terms have

sparked interest within education (p. 274), and suggest a need for spirituality in teacher education.

“A teacher has the power to compel students to spend many hours living in the light, or the shadow, of the teacher’s inner life” (Palmer, 2003, p. 378). An individual’s inner life encapsulates their “experiences, thoughts, and feelings” and is related to their spirit (Radford, 2006, p. 386). Teaching is a complex process that involves teachers’ varied experiences and their personal viewpoints of learning and teaching (Pillen, Den Brok, & Beijjaard, 2013) and teaching requires the appropriate background and skills to address societal and individual needs.

Today’s classrooms are more diverse than ever before. They include students from varying backgrounds, with different learning abilities, and socioeconomic statuses. This has created a greater challenge for education, as teachers require larger skillsets for teaching such a diverse population (Bartolo & Smyth, 2009; Palmer, 1998). Teachers are also expected to deliver more than just the curriculum by establishing meaningful and respectful relationships with their students, and making responsible choices that cater to students’ needs, including their spiritual needs (Kung, 2007). This requires a holistic approach to teacher education that is balanced and includes spirituality (Rolph & Rolph, 2011).

Buchanan and Hyde (2008) explain that holistic education includes addressing the “cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions of learning” (p. 312). Holistic education’s roots are in the philosophical ideas of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Steiner, and Montessori (Kung, 2007) and Plato’s tradition, where the focus was on studying the various traditions and faiths of the world, in addition to exploring “the self, the heart and the soul” (Miller & Drake, 1997, p. 241). “Spirituality reflects wholeness or centeredness”, which is “a necessary condition for learning and growth”

(Allison & Broadus, 2009, p. 78). A holistic approach to teacher education would require an integrated approach to learning where, besides knowledge and skills, pre-service teachers could also learn about themselves in a deeper sense as individuals and teachers (Tucker, 2010).

Good teaching is an intentional activity that comes naturally from within teachers who love their work and give everything from within themselves for their students' learning (Palmer, 1998). Good teachers are like weavers who create a web of interconnectedness with everyone and everything around them (Palmer, 1998); they do this by melding their spirituality into their teaching (Kernochan, McCormick, & White, 2007). Teachers' worldviews and attitudes impact the way they teach, and enhancing their capacities to become good teachers could be done by incorporating the concept of spirituality within teacher education programs (De Souza, 2016).

Positive experiences with spirituality for pre-service teachers (Izadinia, 2015) with a focus on holistic education could help teachers teach the concept of spirituality or develop spiritual wellbeing within schools more effectively, which is also an objective in some Australian school education documents, such as the Melbourne Declaration and the Health and Physical Education Curriculum, Tasmania.

2.10 Australian Curriculum Documents

As discussed in the previous section, teacher education provides pre-service teachers with learning experiences that enable them to teach well within the school environment. Within Australia, the government provides a framework for education around which schools develop their curricula. Some of these documents address the spiritual wellbeing of students and are discussed below.

2.10.1 The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, 2008 and Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (2015)

To provide a curriculum framework for school education, The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD, 2008), in agreement with all education ministers in Australia, developed the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, 2008* (MDEGYA). This document discusses the importance of education in Australia, and the effects of globalisation and technological innovation, which requires young Australians to be able to contribute to the global economy (DEECD, 2008). This is further elaborated by stating that education helps promote “intellectual, physical, social, emotional, moral, *spiritual* and aesthetic development and wellbeing of young Australians, and in ensuring the nation’s ongoing economic prosperity and social cohesion” (p. 4, emphasis added). One of the educational outcomes in MDEGYA is the development of “confident and creative individuals” who “have a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, *spiritual* and physical wellbeing” (p. 9, emphasis added). While the term “spiritual” is not defined in this document, nonetheless the DEECD places an importance on the spiritual aspect of students’ education.

In the companion document that explains the *Melbourne Declaration*, the MCEETYA four-year plan 2009 – 2012, the Ministerial Council on Education (2009) clarifies that the educational outcomes designed by the Australian education ministers and their teams are meant for the betterment of all young Australians to help them lead responsible, productive, and fulfilling lives while contributing to Australia’s social and economic prosperity (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting

Authority (ACARA), 2015). Education aims to develop individuals who are knowledgeable, skilled, and cultured, with values that would benefit their personal and professional lives and should be concerned with all facets of human existence (Jacobs, 2012).

The *Melbourne Declaration* (DEECD, 2008) discuss spiritual wellbeing and documents from ACARA (2015) also discuss the importance of spirituality in the curriculum. One such example is from the Humanities and Social Sciences year 2 curriculum, which includes teaching “The importance today of an historical site of cultural or spiritual significance in the local area and why it should be preserved” (p. 94). There are many other such examples where spirituality and concepts associated with it are mentioned in Australian school curriculum documents. Teaching these concepts would require teachers to have a well-developed understanding of the concepts, and skills to teach them well.

2.10.2 Health and Wellbeing Curriculum for Schools, Tasmania (2008)

Within the state of Tasmania, a Health and Wellbeing Curriculum for schools, was developed by the Department of Education, Tasmania (2008) which states,

Health and wellbeing comprises a number of dimensions of health. In the Tasmanian Health and Wellbeing syllabus, five dimensions are identified: physical, social, emotional, mental and spiritual health. The five dimensions of health overlap and interconnect; general wellbeing is dependent on continual growth and development in all five dimensions. (p. 5)

This document provides evidence of the importance the government places on spirituality, at the school level. This would require teachers to be equipped to address the five dimensions of wellbeing for their students, including the spiritual. To address this requirement, the University of Tasmania's Faculty of Education developed two wellbeing units in Health and Physical Education for pre-service teachers. An objective for one of these units is stated below:

One purpose of this unit is to develop your knowledge in relation to a variety of pedagogical considerations which are not only pertinent to Health and Physical Education teaching but also general classroom teaching, ensuring each student is catered for not only physically but also emotionally, socially, mentally and spiritually. (University of Tasmania, 2017)

The fact that the University of Tasmania is providing pre-service teachers of Health and Physical education with an understanding of spirituality to be able to teach in schools is evidence of the need and importance of the concept in higher education within Australia.

2.10.3 Australian National School Chaplaincy Program (2007)

Another document which outlines a program for students' spiritual wellbeing is the Australian National School Chaplaincy Program (ANSCP) (Australian Government, 2007), which was developed to provide spiritual and religious support at schools. This national government program created the role of school chaplains to provide support for students' spiritual wellbeing and pastoral care (Crabb, 2009). James and Benson (2014, p. 143) explain, "The word 'chaplain' is derived from the Old French word *chapelain*, meaning cape or coat, evoking an image of a chaplain as

a person who would wrap their cape around a homeless or sick person to provide warmth or comfort.”

Within educational contexts, Hughes (2012) and Hunt (2013) clarify that chaplains are spiritual leaders who have responsibilities for managing the spiritual ethos of educational institutions. According to Fisher (2012), the chaplains in the ANSCP were not based on any religious denomination, while Barker (2015) contradicts him, stating that the program was politically motivated by the Prime Minister at the time, John Howard, who was affiliated with the Anglican Church, and was meant to employ Christian chaplains. Nonetheless, over the years ANSCP has evolved and now employs people who are religious but not necessarily Christians (Crabb, 2009), and it continues to provide spiritual wellbeing and pastoral care to students in schools (Barker, 2015).

The *MDEGYA*, school curriculum documents by ACARA, the Department of Education in Tasmania, the ANSCP, and other such endeavours by Australian governments suggest the importance they place on spirituality within school systems. The inclusion of spirituality with one of the University of Tasmania’s pre-service teacher education units is evidence of the importance of equipping teachers with the ability to teach spirituality within schools. This suggests the need for teacher educators all over Australia to empower their pre-service teachers with the necessary skills to help students with their spiritual wellbeing. It seems that the concept of spirituality is important for teacher education; an examination of its importance for business education follows.

2.11 Spirituality and Business Education

Today's workplaces are becoming more diversified and global, employing individuals from various backgrounds, who bring in their own values, work ethics, and practices. Despite the fact that most universities teaching business and management courses have incorporated business ethics within their curricula (Waddock & Lozano, 2013), and that almost all major organizations have codes of ethics in place, problematic ethical issues within businesses have not been mitigated (Vasconcelos, 2015). The corporate world still has examples of highly intelligent and skilful professionals getting involved in corruption and scandals (Tang, 2010), such as at British Petroleum and Enron (Heller & Heller, 2011). This has resulted in the loss of confidence in businesses and leaders in many parts of the world.

Business ethics was introduced in the 1980s within the business world, as a means to reduce the focus of organisations on profit maximization by any means. This enabled organisations to self-regulate and mitigate some of the ethical issues, but remained unsuccessful in mitigating major corporate scandals (Bouckaert, 2015) discussed above. He explains that the reason for these issues was the way business professionals became selective in their business practices, becoming more market-driven and lacking intrinsic motivation to do no harm to others (Bouckaert, 2015). Bouckaert (2015) further asserts,

If we have to reshape our economic, political and religious institutions, we need something that has deeper roots than our institutional settings. We need something that can restore a sense of shared meaning, responsibility and purpose. This something is what we may call spirituality. (p. 16)

Bouckaert (2011, 2015) asserts that ethics requires an underpinning of spirituality making it more meaningful and purposeful for managing any organisation. Management education could cater to this by incorporating spirituality within its curriculum and teaching concepts like workplace spirituality and leadership. A spiritual approach to ethics education relates to practices that allow people to connect deeply with each other and develops intrinsic motivation to look for long-term organisational benefits within the business and the market (Bouckaert & Zsolnai, 2012).

Scholars of management, communication, and spirituality maintain that spirituality is important and provides a framework for the way people work (McGuire, 2009). Studies by Bell-Ellis et al. (2015) and Yaghoubi and Motahhari (2016) reveal that there is a positive relationship between spirituality and the workplace, which enhances employee performance. Findings from the Bell-Ellis et al. (2015) study revealed that that organisational commitment from employees greatly depends on how they perceive their spirituality at work, while the study by Yaghoubi and Motahhari (2016) revealed that spirituality at work has three main dimensions: “meaningful work, sense of solidarity and belonging, and alignment with organizational values and goals” (p. 126). They further added that happiness in the workplace is also important as a spiritual dimension of employees and can be beneficial for organisations.

The increasing interest in workplace spirituality has resulted in organisations expecting higher education, especially business management faculties, to look into incorporating the concept in their programs (Crossman, 2015b). This has been ascribed to the evidence provided by various studies (e.g., Quatro, 2004; Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Bell-Ellis, 2015) that state that spirituality in the workplace enhances

employee performance, thereby leading to higher profitability for organisations (Fernando, 2005).

Bouckaert (2015) and Bilimoria (1998) suggest that current management education needs a balance between rationality and spirituality, with an increased focus on spiritual intelligence, and updated management theories, in line with the latest research. Spiritual intelligence is a relatively new concept that enables individuals to make meaning of their lives, and identify ways to cope well with situations that may be challenging, using a holistic approach especially within their workplace (Upadhyay, 2017). This helps them become resilient and stay positive (Darvishzadeh & Bozorgi, 2017).

Incorporating spirituality in management education could help business schools build an environment that engages their learners in discourses that touch the spiritual nature of the human being (Bilimoria, 1998), and enable students to understand themselves more deeply (Barnett, Krell, & Sendry, 2000). Crossman (2007, p. 3) further asserts, “Business students in secular universities need to be prepared for workplaces where they will be required to interact with others in spiritually sensitive ways”. This will help them become managers prepared to embrace diversity, manage people well, and respond to workplace spirituality appropriately.

Spirituality in business education could help potential managers to develop into well-rounded business professionals, capable of managing their own, and their employees', physical and emotional needs, enabling them to balance self-interest and altruism, and benefitting everyone in the system (Grzeda & Assogbavi, 2011). These professionals would also maximize human capital, enabling full or optimal human development (Burack, 1999; Grzeda & Assogbavi, 2011), bringing out the best in

everyone, resulting in high productivity and job satisfaction, with benefits moving into society.

Nash (cited in Harris & Crossman, 2005, p. 3) reveals that, in 2003, there were “over seventy five academic programs with some reference to religion or spirituality and leadership in the United States”, but in Australia only “one course that linked spirituality with leadership” was found (Harris & Crossman, 2005, p. 3). There could be several reasons for this disparity. One of the main reasons could be that Australians consider spirituality, and issues related to it, as personal and so do not like to discuss this openly. Another reason could be that most business courses have ethics and values in place within their curricula, and these are regarded to be sufficient, while there may be some academics who bring their own spirituality to their teaching but do not verbalise it (Harris & Crossman, 2005).

There are several examples in literature that demonstrate the successful integration of spirituality in management development courses within the USA. Dalton, Eberhardt, Bracken, and Echols (2006) explain that Santa Clara University offers a course on “Spirituality and Business”, which enables students to examine and explore the spiritual aspects of leadership, and, The University of Notre Dame offers a course on “Spirituality and Religion in the Workplace”. Similarly, Crossman (2015b) states that the Stanford Graduate School of Business and the Yale School of Management teach spirituality as a course, but no details were found. Some universities teach spirituality implicitly through courses such as corporate social responsibility and citizenship, and positive management (Crossman, 2015b). Neal (2008) suggests that spirituality could be taught in business education holistically by integrating it within the curriculum. She further added that concepts such as “Servant Leadership”, “Emotional and Spiritual Intelligence”, “Finding Your Calling”, and

“Team Spirit” could integrate well within professional business and management curricula (Neal, 2008, p. 390).

Marques et al. claim spirituality within management provides a holistic approach to human performance within the workplace, which can be beneficial for employees and organisations, and is here to stay (2014). This makes it necessary to include spirituality in management education.

2.12 Concepts Associated with Spirituality in Higher Education

There are many concepts associated with spirituality that are salient to higher education, and a few associated with this study will be discussed briefly.

2.12.1 Spiritual Wellbeing

Spiritual wellbeing (SWB) is a concept closely related to spirituality, which has been given a greater emphasis within educational contexts in recent years. Ellison (1983, cited in Fisher, 2009 b, p. 273) explains spiritual wellbeing as that which “arises from an underlying state of spiritual health and is an expression of it, much like the colour of one’s complexion and pulse rate are expressions of good [physical] health” (p. 273). Fisher (2009a, p. 153) defines SWB as “a dynamic state of being, shown by the extent to which people live in harmony within relationships in the following domains”: personal or the self, communal or other people, environmental or the environment, and transcendental or God or other (Fisher, 2009a). Muñoz-García and Aviles-Herrera (2013) present a Christian view of SWB, which refers to an individual’s relationship with God, and associates it with faith and is holistic in nature.

According to Rogers and Hill (2002), the concept of SWB emerged from the Hindu tradition of using a holistic view to refer to the human body as a four-roomed house, where each room represents each of the “physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual aspects” of individuals (p. 274). While education, in general, focuses on the intellectual, emotional, and physical capacities of individuals, this analogy seems to identify the spiritual dimension of learners as being equal to each of the other three.

Government documents on education, such as the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MDEGYA) (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, (DEECD), 2009), discuss the spiritual wellbeing of students as an important goal involving “a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing” (p. 9). Donnelly (2014) explains that MDEGYA is an educational policy that provides a roadmap for the national curriculum, which includes addressing students’ spiritual wellbeing. Similarly, the Department of Education, Tasmania (2008) has developed a document that requires schools to address students’ spiritual health and wellbeing. These two documents seem to address students’ spiritual health and wellbeing, although the word spirituality itself is avoided in documents such as these.

Perhaps the association of spirituality with religion, the separation of church and state, lack of awareness of the scope of spirituality as opposed to religion, and the lack of a unified academic definition of spirituality make it challenging to use the word spirituality within educational contexts, making SWB more acceptable instead. The complexities associated with defining spirituality could be the reason the term has not been used in MDEGYA (Bini, 2009). While SWB is also encouraged by management within academic (Beer, 2010) and business organisations, there is a

closely associated concept called *workplace and organisational spirituality* (Badrinarayan & Madhavaram, 2008) which seem more appropriate to use within organisations.

2.12.2 Workplace and Organisational Spirituality

Workplace spirituality is a relatively new concept dating to around 1990 (Mahadevan, 2013; Neal, 2008). Neal (1997) presents a comprehensive explanation about workplace spirituality:

Spirituality in the workplace is about people seeing their work as a spiritual path, as an opportunity to grow personally and to contribute to society in a meaningful way. It is about learning to be more caring and compassionate with fellow employees, with bosses, with subordinates and customers. It is about integrity, being true to oneself and telling the truth to others. It means attempting to live your values more fully in your work. It can refer to the ways in which organizations structure themselves to support the spiritual development of employees. (p. 123)

This definition gives a basic overview of workplace spirituality, where the workplace—if it fulfils the needs of employees by making the work more meaningful, and fostering altruistic behaviours—develops a sense of community within the members of the organisation (Garcia-Zamor, 2003). Quatro (2004) explains that while workplace spirituality seems to be a relatively new concept, it dates back to management theories of Follet (1918), who proposed that employees and managers work harmoniously together and each individual's contribution is recognised and appreciated, as it would in any community life and “spoke of shared governance as a ‘great spiritual force evolving itself from men’” (Quatro, 2004, p. 229).

Similarly, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, as applied in the workplace, discusses the combination of job design, motivation, and spirituality, to help employees reach self-actualisation, where employee performance focuses on doing the best for everyone and being selfless (Quatro, 2004). His theory also provides a foundation for leadership that is spiritual in nature and that caters to employees' religious or spiritual needs (O'Connor & Yballe, 2007). Both Follet and Maslow, and other theorists have presented theories over the years around the factors that influence employee performance, and seem to be addressing the same ideas of fulfilling employees' personal and professional needs, which include spirituality (Mansi, 2012; O'Connor & Yballe, 2007). The reason for these theories is that employees spend a significant part of their time in their workplace, and their work has become an integral part of their existence (Kolodinsky et al., 2007), and they require more than just work and profitability out of the workplace (Grzeda & Assogbavi, 2011). They also feel that their spiritual journeys should be part of the workplace environment, and feel the need to be interconnected with each other (Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2002), and to develop better interpersonal skills with a sense of belonging and meaning in their work (Kolodinsky et al., 2007).

With the rising interest in workplace spirituality, many organizations have begun reinventing themselves and modifying their focus from the material aspect of work to the spiritual aspect of their work (Rego & Cunha, 2008). For example, the companies IKEA and Costco used interconnectedness as a dimension of spirituality to build a sense of community and belonging among their employees, through sharing of purpose and connecting with each other. This helped employees feel valued and gave meaning to their work, resulting in their organisational commitment (Bell-Ellis et al., 2015). According to Bell-Ellis et al. (2015), there is a positive relationship between

workplace spirituality and organisational commitment, which is “defined as a psychological relationship between an organization and its employees that decreases turnover in organizations” (p. 160).

Some organisations have aligned their corporate values with concepts associated with spirituality, such as corporate social responsibility and employee satisfaction (Vasconcelos, 2015), and have incorporated their employees’ personal religious and spiritual beliefs (Cunha et al., 2006; Klenke, 2005). These organisations prefer to be called spiritually-based organisations (Vasconcelos, 2015). Examples of such organisations include Intel, Coca-Cola, Boeing, and Sears (p. 90), where spiritual and religious practices—such as studying religious scriptures, interfaith dialogues, meditation, and reflection sessions—are part of workplace life (Karakas, 2010). Rego and Cunha (2008) clarify that workplace spirituality does not relate to any specific religious system, and is more about the personal values and philosophies of the employees who consider themselves as spiritual beings.

While spirituality is becoming acceptable within the workplace (Pawar, 2008), identifying what entails workplace spirituality, without offending any religion, is a challenge, as spirituality has its roots in religion, and most workplaces dissociate themselves from any overtly religious facets (Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2002; Pawar, 2008). Organizations that are unaware of workplace spirituality fail to understand the relationship between the employees’ spiritual needs and effective organizational performance (Poole, 2009; Rego & Cunha, 2008). According to Korac-Kakabadse et al. (2002), spirituality is not an irrational concept and has a definite place within an organisation’s design and practice.

According to Cafferky (2012), a sense of spirituality within the workplace helps create a balance between self-interest, altruism, and the organisation, by

enabling employees to transcend self-interest to work together (Pawar, 2008), and taking care of others and the workplace. This can lead to committed (Bell-Ellis et al., 2015), joyful (Crossman, 2007), productive (Cafferky, 2012), and more creative (Fry, 2005) employees who can have a direct impact on the organisation's financial success (Butts, 1999; Garcia-Zamor, 2003). To achieve this, Jurkiewicz and Giacalone (2004) and Pawar (2009) are of the opinion that workplace spirituality would require developing an organisational culture and practices that enable employees and management to experience transcendence and connectedness. Pawar (2009) describes a spiritual organisational culture that fosters employees' spiritual transformation, helping them improve in their "personal functioning (e.g., improvement in ability to overcome fatigue), interpersonal functioning (e.g., improved conflict handling), and organizational functioning (e.g., improved interdepartmental understanding)" (p. 380). He suggests that such organisations have leadership that is visionary, and nurtures "benevolence, generativity, justice" (Pawar, 2009, p. 380) and respect, enabling employees to feel their work as their calling with a feeling of joy and connectedness with their workplace and others.

Just like defining spirituality, the challenge to define workplace spirituality remains, mainly because of the ill-defined private and public understandings of the concept of spirituality and its acceptance within the workplace (Grzeda & Assogbavi, 2011). Although workplace spirituality is not about religion, many employees are religious and relate to spirituality through their faith, and authors suggest that this should not be discouraged (Neal, 2008; Quatro, 2004; Schley, 2008).

Individuals can develop personally and professionally, when they connect with each other and their workplace within social contexts (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). This helps create a ripple effect, where employees and management develop a

unified vision, which leads them to commit to enriching their own lives and those of others in the workplace, leading to social processes that could benefit the society at large (OSED, 1994). Spirituality in the workplace is thus emerging as a new paradigm where professionals are expected to be better prepared to embrace diversity, manage people, and respond to employees' own spirituality (Burack, 1999; Grzeda & Assogbavi, 2011).

2.12.3 Spirituality and Leadership

Historically, spirituality and leadership have been associated with religion, but within organisational contexts, “spirituality and leadership” is about reformation within the organisation in order to foster integrity and harmony, within the individual and the organisation (Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2002). Based on human values, spiritual leadership opposes punitive measures and the repression of others, and provides means to intrinsically motivate oneself and employees, to have a sense of “spiritual survival through calling and membership” (Fry 2003). Fry (2005) suggests that leadership based on spirituality needs to develop meaningful spiritual practices within the workplace for all, like knowing oneself, respecting and honouring others' beliefs, being trusting, spending time in nature, reflecting on one's thoughts, praying and meditating, making wise decisions, and being aware of the consequences of those decisions—practices she believes are known to help everyone's wellbeing (Fry, 2005).

Literature suggests that organisations can be viewed as “spiritual entities” (Afsar, Badir, & Kiani, 2016; Crossman, 2011), which means that as employees spend a large amount of their time at work, “their spiritual identities are embedded in their

organisations” (Afsar et al., 2016, p. 80), and are manifested in employee behaviours, that demonstrate their spiritual values (Crossman, 2011).

Hertz and Friedman (2015, p.12) explain that “the corporate world led by greedy and self-interested CEOs was heading down a dangerous path for more than 25 years”, eventually resulting in corporate scandals, such as those occurring at Enron, and WorldCom (McLaughlin, 2005), and the 2008 Global Financial Crisis (GFC) (Hertz & Friedman, 2015). Consequently, employees either lost their jobs or had job insecurities (Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2002), and the high unemployment rates and loss of the market value of commodities (Hertz & Friedman, 2015) resulted in a loss of trust towards the corporate leadership in many organisations (Bouckaert, 2015). The values demonstrated by some of these unethical corporate leaders affected not only the global economy but also created ethical and moral dilemmas within the corporate world. As a result, numerous theories of leadership with an underpinning of spirituality, that are value-based, have been developed.

One such theory of spiritual-based leadership was recently developed by Pruzan (2015) which states:

Spiritual-based leaders are nourished by their spirituality, which is a source within them that informs and guides them. They search for meaning, purpose and fulfilment in the external world of business and the internal world of consciousness and conscience. Their external actions and their internal reflections harmonise so that rationality and spirituality are mutually supportive. (p.169)

Spiritual-based leaders are great promoters of personal development and believe that the process of change starts from within an individual and not from outside (Korac-Kakabadse et al, 2002). These leaders enable employees to address the

religious diversity found within the workplace (Crossman 2014), and build trust and relationships within the organisation to develop meaning in the workplace (Crossman, 2015a). Spiritual-based leaders are proactive, capable of inspiring others to modify their behaviours to achieve a common goal that would benefit all (Frisdiantara & Sahertian, 2012; Lample, 2003). Employees under such leaders are organisationally committed (Bell-Ellis et al., 2015; Fry, 2005), highly motivated, have improved morale, lower stresses, and higher job satisfaction, which impacts the overall organisational performance (Crossman, 2007).

Leadership has always had the power to work for the betterment of humanity, “but its proper use or abuse depends on the varying degrees of enlightenment, capacity, faith, honesty, devotion and high-mindedness of the leaders” (Abdu’l-Bahá, 2010, p. 13). It seems that leadership based on spirituality finds expression in being altruistic and helping others to use their energies and competencies according to their roles within the workplace (Lample, 2003), and channels them for the betterment of the organisation, and through corporate social responsibility may impact society positively (Marques et al., 2014). Kouzes and Pozner (1987, cited in Fry, 2005, p.17) confirm this by saying, “Leadership is the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations.”

Another concept associated with spiritual leadership is servant leadership (Chen, Chen, & Li, 2013). According to Chen et al. (2013), servant leadership focuses on serving others, including their employees, placing “other’s interests above their own”. These leaders use the qualities of “love, humility, altruism, trust, vision, empowerment, and servant hood” (Chen et al., 2013, p. 420) to lead their followers, and achieve their organisational goals, while empowering their employees to do the same (Chen et al., 2013; Schwepker & Schultz, 2015).

The definitions and concepts associated with spirituality discussed in the sections of this chapter so far demonstrate the varied viewpoints of spirituality in literature, and are often dependent on context. Despite the difficulty in identifying a unifying definition, however, it has been argued that aspects of spirituality certainly have a useful place in higher education. With this in mind, it is important to examine pedagogical practices that might facilitate its teaching.

2.13 Pedagogical Approaches to Teaching Spirituality

According to Mercadal (2016), pedagogy is related to the transmission of knowledge, and its theories and practices, in a formal educational setting. Within higher education, there are numerous theories that influence the approaches academics use to teach, and to teach spirituality would require the use of pedagogical approaches that would instil the concept effectively. Cecero and Prout (2014) confirmed in a study that academics' spirituality influenced their pedagogical approaches to teaching. The study also revealed that academics' spirituality is subjective in nature and relates greatly to their personal experiences and understanding of spirituality.

Academics' spirituality may have an influence on their pedagogical approaches to teaching spirituality, irrespective of whether it is theology or any other academic discipline, within higher education (Lingley, 2016). For this study, the pedagogical approaches to teaching spirituality within teacher and business education are discussed, with an assumption of similarity between their teaching methodologies.

Teaching spirituality in the university is still rare, and the lack of a language that caters to both religious and non-religious viewpoints makes it more challenging

(Groen, 2008). Nevertheless, some studies have revealed that there are pedagogical approaches used in other areas of higher education that could be used to teach spirituality effectively (Allison & Broadus, 2009; Groen, 2008; Hodge & Derezotes, 2008; Papoulis, 1996). However, these authors indicate that due to the nature of the concept, pedagogical approaches to teaching spirituality would require a consideration of a number of additional factors.

2.13.1 Need for Spiritual Language

As discussed above, people interpret the term spirituality in a wide variety of ways. This diverse understanding may result in a lack of common comprehension of terminologies, and create miscommunication. Spirituality is a concept that some academics and students may consider as private and so may find it challenging to discuss it openly, as it could mean different things to different people, which may lead to confusion (Geary, 2013). In contrast, other academics and students may feel the need to articulate the meaning they give to their daily implicit and explicit experiences (Rego & Cunha, 2008). To incorporate spirituality within higher education, a shared language for spirituality is needed that can be understood by all academics, students, and the administration (Gunnlaugson & Vokey, 2013).

This requires academics to take on the responsibility to develop a spiritual language —through research— by understanding how students discuss the concept of spirituality, using their worldviews, and then building the various means of communication, such as words, actions, or symbols, accordingly (Rockenbach, Mayhew, Davidson, Ofstein, & Bush, 2015) and then develop a standardised vocabulary for common understanding.

Flanagan (2011) asserts that the effective teaching of spirituality requires a language that is all inclusive, catering to the varied understandings of the term, and used with great care. If a language used is imbalanced or biased towards one view of spirituality, this could lead to division and disrespect in the classroom, instead of inclusion (Crossman, 2015b). Gunnlaugson and Vokey (2013) assert that a language of spirituality should be sufficiently rich and sophisticated to enable academics to discuss the concept academically, while having the capacity to enable students to engage in meaningful conversations around the topic.

As the teaching of spirituality in higher education is still in its infancy, the lack of experience makes it challenging to identify the appropriate language required (Manz et al., 2006). Frohlich (2001) suggests that using the language of philosophy and theology, and their resources, could be very beneficial in the development of the language of spirituality. These could enable academics to teach the concept more effectively while avoiding issues surrounding its very sensitive and personal nature (Frohlich, 2001).

2.13.2 The Teacher of Spirituality

Another important factor to consider for teaching spirituality concerns the teacher's awareness and understanding of the term (Gibson, 2014). As discussed previously, the concept of spirituality can be understood in terms of religion, or a way of life, or connectedness. For spirituality to be taught, especially at university level, teachers need to be aware of the complexities associated with the word, and how it may be used or interpreted by students. This is especially significant because academics influence the way students interact with people in their professional lives,

through student-academic interactions within and outside the classroom (Lindholm & Astin, 2008).

Lindholm and Astin (2008) explain that the teacher of spirituality is more a facilitator of learning and uses student-centred approaches that are focused on the learner rather than the teacher, whose role is to provide guidance and support during learning. These approaches are generally expected in higher education for teaching any subject, but to teach spirituality this is imperative. This is because the individualised yet complex nature of spirituality needs exploration rather than explicit teaching through content and evaluation (Lindholm & Astin, 2008).

Besides being a facilitator, academics need to develop additional skillsets to teach spirituality sensitively and provide a positive experience for their students (Palmer, 1998). Academics would need to be more focused on individuals rather than on groups, and provide ongoing support to achieve the individualised goals they set together, besides those of the curriculum. Teaching and learning approaches would need to align with the students' capacities and encourage them to aim for high ideals expected by society and in life, by helping each student align their values, beliefs, and behaviour accordingly (Lample, 2010).

According to Palmer (1998, p. 1), "we teach who we are." Educators' spirituality is reflected in their work. Lindholm and Astin (2008) suggest that academics' spirituality can be a model for the development of their students' spiritual base. Spiritually-oriented academics place a higher importance on their own and institutional values, and become role models for their students. They also encourage their students to get involved in community development, and other humanitarian work, while being accountable for their actions (Lindholm & Astin, 2008; Mezirow, 2003). These academics enable students to identify different behaviours and the

reasons for those behaviours in value-laden work, helping them understand the importance of spirituality (Halstead, 1999).

2.13.3 A Safe Environment

All classrooms where individuals receive formal education, whether face-to-face or online, are places where teachers can create safe environments (Lindholm & Astin, 2008; Palmer, 1998). The creation of a safe environment, where students feel free to express themselves, is central to the student-centred approach (Neal, 2008; Palmer, 2003; Zinn, 1997), and can help students learn. A safe learning environment allows students to fail and try again without fear, and supports students discussing their spiritual concerns and stresses they face in the real world, risk free (Crosbie, 2005). This would also cater to students who may not want to discuss their own personal spirituality in class, for any reason, and would not want to be judged for it (Neal, 2008).

There is potential for contention in a class where spirituality is taught, as students may come from various backgrounds and may have sensitivities that could create stressful situations, such as emotional distress, loneliness, and disconnectedness. To avoid contention, the teaching of spirituality must carefully consider student diversity issues with great sensitivity (Lindholm & Astin, 2008). This requires developing mutual trust, respect, and acceptance for everyone present, and enabling students to learn from other students having experience in the area of spirituality and develop their understanding of the concept (Baha'i International Community, 2010; Lindholm & Astin, 2008). This could be further facilitated by having a small group setting of ten to fifteen students per class, as the setting can be personalised as a safe space for all to participate. However, this is challenging within

university settings with traditionally large cohorts, and so large classes could be divided into small groups who could be taught the same way, in a safe space.

2.14 Specific Pedagogical Practices

As already mentioned, some pedagogical approaches to teaching spirituality resemble those already in use by academics teaching areas other than spirituality. Spirituality is considered by some to be vital for lifelong learning, but requires in-depth knowledge of the subject, intertwined with appropriate pedagogical practices (Lindholm & Astin, 2008).

2.14.1 Discussions

Discussions are a pedagogical approach used in almost every discipline in higher education. Within a classroom, discussions can take various forms, allowing students to think beyond a particular topic, and may go off topic. A study conducted by Lindholm and Astin (2008) revealed that while there are many student-centred approaches, class discussions are the most effective pedagogical practices to teach spirituality, as they allow students to express their views openly in a safe environment.

Discussing spirituality in the classroom can be very stimulating (Rogers & Hill, 2002), and may spark students' interest in exploring their own spirituality. These discussions can become enlightening for academics and students, as they provide insights into the diverse viewpoints of people's understanding of spirituality, and can enable them to examine the practical implications of this understanding within their own lives and society (Hogan, 2009).

2.14.2 Reflective Practice

Reflective practice or “journaling is described as the keeping of a diary or a collection of pertinent words or paragraphs for the purpose of providing for reflection of practice in a focused way” (Bush, 1999, p. 20). Reflective writing requires individuals to specifically think about something, be analytical, and relate experiences to one’s life (Hedberg, 2008).

Reflective writing has been used to teach spirituality by engaging students in specific self-directed activities by reflecting on their learning in a journal (Trott, 2013). Allison and Broadus (2009), Bush (1999), Horner and Tucker (2013), and Rockenbach et al. (2015) are of the opinion that students need to be systematically guided to keep a reflective journal, where they write about their personal experiences and understanding of spirituality within the classroom setting. Students may also be encouraged to carry out various activities—such as writing, group projects, and gathering information on opposing ideas—and then reflect on and share their learning with their teacher, on a one-on-one basis, forming a strong relationship of trust and care (Lovat, Clement, Dally, & Toomey, 2010).

Timoštšuk and Ugaste (2010) assert that reflective practices need careful planning before implementing them in the classroom. The teacher needs an understanding of the activity presented to the students and how it connects to the content being taught. The elements of reflection must be carefully explained to students and if a student feels uncomfortable or distressed during the activity, the teacher should be able to manage the situation appropriately (Timoštšuk & Ugaste, 2010), especially as the topic of spirituality may affect emotions and sensitivities.

2.14.3 Case Study

“A case study is a teaching tool, which can help people learn how to find a solution to a situation where there is more than one possible solution” (Kooskora, 2003, p. 57), and is another pedagogical approach suitable for teaching spirituality. A case describes a genuine real-life situation and contains relevant situations about which students make well analysed decisions (Kooskora, 2003). This method is widely used within most higher education disciplines, especially business education, where cases are presented to students to determine the causes and effects of actions taken by an entity (Carnegie & Napier, 2010). Mezirow (1997) suggests that the case study approach is more effective when integrated with other pedagogical approaches such as discussions, storytelling, reflective practice, and group work. To teach spirituality using this approach, students are provided with cases to study, in order to reflect on the contribution of virtues and spirituality in the case (Manz et al., 2006). For example, Marques et al. (2014) provided students with case studies about various corporations with a spiritual ethos, allowing students to explore the benefits of the approach to the organisations and employees.

2.14.4 Storytelling

According to Hamstra (2017), human beings have been involved in storytelling even before recorded history. Storytelling engages people through shared understanding of experiences narrated as a story (Hamstra, 2017). Storytelling has been used as a teaching method since at least the time of Plato, who used personal stories, parables, and myths to engage students in learning and develop thinking skills (Abrahamson, 1998). Teaching spirituality using this approach requires academics to prepare stories for sharing and engaging students to discuss issues around spirituality,

encouraging them to share their own stories with the class (Fox, Gillis, Anderson, & Lordly, 2017). Storytelling can be used as a pedagogical approach to “teach spirituality by intertwining the material and spiritual aspects of the topic being presented” (Jorgensen, 2013, p. 45), and can include video clips, self-reflection, and case studies (Marques et al., 2014).

2.14.5 Individual Exploration and Experience

This pedagogical approach to teaching spirituality allows students to work independently and individually to explore and experience their spirituality. Academics provide students with theory and ideas upon which to practice spirituality as an “applied science” (see appendix F), with support through a one-on-one mentoring program (Flanagan, 2011, p. 48). Assessment tasks such as reflective writing are based on the experiences that they believe are spiritual in nature (Flanagan, 2011). This approach allows students the flexibility to understand spirituality through guided learning.

2.15 University of Tasmania’s Graduate Attributes

As already discussed, this study investigates academics’ perceptions of the role of teaching spirituality in developing their students’ professional identities. Graduates, through their university experiences, develop certain attributes which they take to the workplace, as part of their professional identities. This makes it imperative to examine the generic attributes the University of Tasmania expects its graduates to develop and whether any of the attributes are associated with spirituality.

Universities in Australia expect their graduates to develop certain “skills, personal attributes and values” (Readman, 2011, p. 11) as general outcomes for all students irrespective of their disciplines. Graduate attributes “fall into four broad categories: fundamental skills; people skills; thinking skills; and personal skills” (AQFC, 2013, p. 40) and are meant to enable students to develop lifelong skills that make them employable and successful (Readman, 2011), while being agents of social good (Barrie, 2006).

The University of Tasmania has developed a Graduate Quality Statement (University of Tasmania, 2014), which is reinforced in each unit outline in all disciplines. This statement explains the attributes expected of its graduates:

The University of Tasmania experience unlocks the potential of individuals. Our graduates are equipped and inspired to shape and respond to the opportunities and challenges of the future as accomplished communicators, highly regarded professionals and culturally competent citizens in local, national, and global society.

University of Tasmania graduates acquire subject and multidisciplinary knowledge and skills, and develop critical and creative literacies and skills of inquiry. Our graduates recognise and critically evaluate issues of social responsibility, ethical conduct and sustainability. Through respect for diversity and by working in collaborative ways, our graduates reflect the values of the University of Tasmania. (p. 2)

These aspirational generic qualities reflect the University of Tasmania’s intentions for its graduates to develop competencies that enable them to perform well within the global society, in an ethical and sustainable way. Some of the concepts—like ethics, sustainability (Bouckaert, 2015), values (Livingstone, 2014),

connectedness (De Souza, 2016), diversity (Hodge, 2014), and integrity and social responsibility (Vasconcelos, 2015)—are concepts associated with spirituality and have been discussed. While the university itself may not ascribe to nor even consider using the term spirituality, it seems to be addressing the issues of current society, by aspiring to develop attributes associated with spirituality for personal and professional benefit. For example, be “highly regarded professionals and culturally competent citizens in local, national, and global society” (University of Tasmania, 2014, p. 2), would require graduates to be able to connect with people from diverse backgrounds with integrity, using values and ethics in their professional lives.

The University of Tasmania expects these attributes to become part of the professional identities of graduates going out into the workforce, irrespective of their discipline study. Thus, generic graduate attributes could affect the professional identities of graduates from the faculties of education and business, but possibly with some differences because of the nature of their professions. This requires an understanding of the term “professional identity” and a review of the way spirituality could affect the professional identities of graduates.

2.16 Professional Identity

A profession is defined as “a paid occupation, especially one that involves prolonged training and a formal qualification” (Oxford Dictionary, 2017), and “has codes of conduct and ethics, which are reflected in professionalism” (Senapaty & Bhuyan, 2014). Historically, the word “professional” was used very specifically for occupations like lawyers and accountants, and later also medical, nursing, and military personnel (Senapaty & Bhuyan, 2014). Professionalism emerged from the concept of being professional and “contains the core elements of: disciplinary-based

knowledge, ethical principles, time and place specific work practices, practitioner autonomy, a commitment to clients' needs, supportive collaborative cultures, and a strong sense of professional identity" (Scotland, 2014, p. 33)

Professional identity is a relatively new concept used to describe the attributes and behaviour expected of people within specific professions. Weiner and Torres (2016) define professional identity development as a "dynamic and ongoing process in which individuals make sense of their experiences to form and (re)form beliefs about what it means to be of a particular profession" (p. 77) and is developed over time (Clarke, Hyde, & Drennan, 2013; Gunz & Gunz, 2007). It depends on an individual's personality, contexts, and experiences, and is multifaceted and dynamic in nature (Scotland, 2014). Universities expect their graduates to have developed professional identities with certain attributes that could influence the workplace accordingly (Gunz & Gunz, 2007; Ibarra, 1999; Winter, 2009).

As this study explores the faculties of education and business, within the University of Tasmania, it is important to examine the professional identities of these two groups even though their generic graduate attributes are likely to be similar. Professional identity will also be explored briefly within the context of spirituality.

2.16.1 Education and Business Graduates' Professional Identities

The 1960s saw discourse around *professionalising* everyone, which eventually resulted in an expectation that professionals would develop their careers by focusing on organisational needs and practices, incorporating them into their own professional lives (Alvesson, 2001; Watson, 2008). In other words, educators, business graduates,

and other professionals build their professional identity within the context of their place of work.

Talking about the professional identities of education graduates, Scotland (2014, p. 33) states, “professional identity is at the core of the teaching profession”, as teachers’ spheres of influence are at a personal level, and potentially very powerful. The professional identity of teachers is the way they perceive themselves, and the way they want others to perceive them (Lasky, 2005). Teachers are aware of what they do for maximum benefit to end users, the individuals who will take charge of future society (Scotland, 2014).

Identity development of education graduates is a complex ongoing process (Lasky, 2005) and involves a number of elements such as the self, institutional culture and roles, social interactions, formal training, and teaching experiences (Scotland, 2014; Weiner & Torres, 2016). Education graduates’ professional identities develop over time during their career, depending on their own personalities, their workplace, and government requirements (Lasky, 2005). Teachers’ professional identities can be cultivated through education and motivating them to get actively involved in societal matters (Gibson, 2013). Teachers with a sense of purpose and meaning should be able to reflect on challenging cultural and societal realities, and find ways to manage those challenges (O’Connor, 2008)

To identify whether spirituality is part of teachers’ professional identities, Stanley (2011) conducted a study in which he defined spirituality, stating that it “includes ‘religious and nonreligious’ activities that promote the ‘human yearning to be connected’” (p. 48). The study revealed that teachers’ professional identities encompassed their spirituality, and enabled them to connect with students, especially in stressful situations. Gibson (2014) identified a similar understanding in a study he

undertook to explore school leaders' and teachers' professional identities and spirituality. All participants of Gibson's (2014) study discussed spirituality as being internalised by them and then externalised by practicing socially and morally responsible behaviours, as part of their professionalism.

Business graduates develop their professional identities by adapting themselves to various career roles and environments while feeling "a sense of oneness with their profession" (Guan, Yang, Zhou, Tian, & Eves, 2016, p. 117) and being willing to meet challenges throughout their career growth. Business graduates are highly educated and knowledgeable professionals who are expected to behave in a way that engenders trust from their clients, and builds relationships with the business that is beneficial to all, and not just the business (Alajoutsijärvi et al., 2015; Gunz & Gunz, 2007).

The development of business graduates' professional identities enables them to view their own profession positively, as they become intrinsically motivated to work well (Guan et al., 2016). This, in turn, leads to high job satisfaction and can be inspiring for others to follow. As a result, business graduates are now expected to be well-rounded professionals, "who are able to engage with deep, philosophical matters including core organizational values rather than being exclusively concerned with tangible outcomes" (Crossman, 2015a, p. 370).

While the literature suggests incorporating spirituality in business education, there appears to be no study exploring the impact of spirituality on the development of the professional identities of business graduates. Manz et al. (2006) explain that business schools that teach spirituality are still unclear about how to teach the concept appropriately and what to teach, given the challenges mentioned above. This makes it

challenging to identify whether spirituality may impact the professional identities of business graduates.

Perhaps business schools in universities can help develop the professional identities of their students by providing them with essential knowledge of the expectations and requirements of the workplace and enabling them to experience spirituality within the classroom (Crossman, 2015b). These graduates could then develop as introspective leaders and managers, who look within themselves to identify their strengths and weaknesses and use their spirituality to manage themselves and others (Ciulla, 2015). To achieve this, universities that teach concepts associated with spirituality—such as “social responsibility and corporate citizenship” or “positive management” (Crossman, 2015b) or “spiritual-based leadership” — (Pruzan, 2015)— could include spirituality within their courses to help develop business graduates’ professional identities.

Petriglieri and Petriglieri (2010) suggest that universities could create spirituality based micro-communities, or small like-minded communities within various faculties, to enable students to build networks that could enhance their professional and personal identities. This could be beneficial in their real-life workplaces, as foundations laid at the university level would be taken to the workplace (Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2010).

2.17 Challenges with Teaching Spirituality in Higher Education

The growing number of studies reveals an interest in spirituality in higher education, but although some institutions have been teaching units with spirituality, the success of such units is yet to be fully verified. Perhaps, the reason for this is the

newness of the concept. This lack of evidence poses a challenge to the incorporation of spirituality in higher education. There are also other challenges which require some discussion.

2.17.1 The Nature of Spirituality

As already discussed, spirituality by nature is subjective and can mean different things to different people. Rockenbach et al. (2015, p. 2) explain that “one task that has challenged scholars and practitioners alike is operationalizing the elusive notion of spirituality.” The many dimensions of the concept create complexities in developing a consensual understanding of the term, making it a challenge to teach (McSherry, Gretton, Draper, & Watson, 2008; Rockenbach et al., 2015).

Natsis (2016, p. 67) asserts that the globalisation of Australian society has led to people looking towards spirituality “outside theology”, which may be acceptable as being “humanistic and focuse[d] on the intrinsic aspect of the individual” (Natsis, 2016, p. 67). Similarly, Frisdiantara and Sahertian (2012) explain that spirituality is understood in varying ways, from being intrinsically personal relating to “matters of the heart” (p.285), as well as being viewed as religious or secular. This has made it challenging for academics to develop a general, applicable definition, and this lack of agreement about the nature of spirituality is a challenge for teaching it in higher education.

2.17.2 Separation of Church and State

Another challenge to teaching spirituality in higher education identified in the literature is the issue of the separation of the church and state. The Australian constitution, Chapter 5, number 116 states,

Commonwealth not to legislate in respect of religion.

The Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion, or for imposing any religious observance, or for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Commonwealth. (Australian Government Solicitor, 2010, p. 27)

This section of the Australian constitution suggests that the government does not require people to be of a certain religion for office and people have the right to choose whatever religion they want; neither the people nor the government would interfere in each other's religious freedom. King (2007) clarifies that the separation of church and state means that the state does not give preference to any religion, and there is no interference in the affairs of the state or the church, from either side. While the first amendment of the US constitution discusses the separation of church and state (Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2014), there is no evidence of the existence of any similar document in Australia that separates the church and state (Fisher, 2012). So the reason for the lack of evidence could be that, despite spirituality being a separate concept from religion, it is still used interchangeably with religion at times (Borges et al., 2015). This creates a challenge for academics to discuss the concept of spirituality within their workplaces (Mahadevan, 2013; McLean, 1994; Neal, 2008), as academics are expected to keep their personal and professional identities separate. According to Crossman (2015a), academics fear that discussing spirituality, a concept still associated with religion for some, could lead to unfavourable consequences, such as "property damage, resignations, dismissal, abusive emails, co-worker aggression, repugnance, shunning and ridicule, often communicated through hostile humour" (Crossman, 2015a, p. 1). While there is a lack of evidence within literature of this assumption, the fear of unfavourable consequences amongst academics could be

because of the notion of the separation of the church and state. As a result, academics feel that spirituality may not be suitable to teach in higher education (Allison & Broadus, 2009).

2.17.3 **Academics' Attitudes**

Fear of Change. Some academics may have misconceptions about spirituality, resulting in the fear that its inclusion within education may affect the way their institution functions (McSherry, 2000). Buchanan (2010) explains that including spirituality within higher education would require a change in the curriculum and teaching practices, and might lead to resistance by academics. This could be because of the uncertainty that change within any institution brings, and academics could feel disconnected, leading to anxiety about job security. The problem would be magnified if faculty leaders avoid communicating and connecting with their academics. There needs to be a sense of connectedness amongst the academics and the institution (Buchanan, 2010) while clarifying how spirituality would be taught within their educational system.

Insufficient Training to Teach Spirituality. All disciplines within the university are expected to cater to the diverse and multicultural student cohorts, and academics may be experienced in managing student diversity. However, academics teaching spirituality require training to enable them to recognise students as spiritual beings (Kung, 2007) and to handle spirituality matters that arise within the classroom (Nelms, 2008). Issues like the religious expression of spirituality or the lack of specific contextual understanding of its concepts, may create challenges both for learners and academics (Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2014). Additionally, some academics might be very strongly supportive of a particular concept of spirituality and

may proselytise (McLaughlin, 2005), causing discomfort for those who may not ascribe to their viewpoints. Training academics in spirituality would also help them identify and nurture their own understanding of teaching spirituality and develop attitudes and behaviours that would help them engage their students with themselves and others (Lample, 2010; Palmer, 2003).

2.17.4 The Perceived Value of Spirituality in the University

Perhaps the most significant challenge to incorporating the teaching of spirituality at the university is academics' perceptions of its value. Bell- Ellis et al. (2015) explain that, historically, interactions between religion and scientific knowledge created conflict, which resulted in the removal of religion from most disciplines in higher education due to proselytising certain religious viewpoints. The pursuit of rational knowledge also dissipated spirituality from higher education (Bell- Ellis et al., 2015). Consequently, academic communities started considering spirituality as “fluffy” (Pruzan, 2015) or soft, and dismissed the potential importance of the holistic development of individuals within higher education (Illes, 2015).

According to Illes (2015, p. 188), academics “dismiss or even ridicule the attempts that try to make sense of the world without trying to force everything into measurable, scientific or abstract frameworks.” Gallagher (2009) asserts that the lack of a proper definition of spirituality and its religious base make it “useless” (p. 68) or inappropriate to teach it in higher education. In the secular Australian context, teaching spirituality does not conform to societal norms; and students may not be intrinsically motivated to learn about spirituality (Crossman 2015).

2.18 Conclusion

This literature review examined the concept of spirituality, and its place in higher education and in the development of the professional identities of education and business graduates. Authors like Crossman (2015b), Fry, (2005), Lindholm and Astin (2008), McLean (1994), Neal (2008), and Tisdell (2008) were specially reviewed for their contribution to literature in the area of spirituality.

Although spirituality has been extensively researched since the end of the twentieth century, an academic definition that is not contested or debated, and that could be used to teach the concept in higher education, is still lacking. The reason for this is that, until recently, spirituality was a concept used interchangeably with religion (Vasconcelos, 2015), and it has only recently emerged as a concept separate from it (Garcia-Zamor, 2003). This continues to challenge academics to develop a definition that would satisfy both religious and secular advocates of spirituality. The subjective interpretations of spirituality enable it to mean anything from interconnectedness (Mitroff & Denton, 1999), to transcendence (Meraviglia, 1999), to purpose (Neal, 2013), or meaning (Sheldrake, 2013), to values (McLean, 1994) or ethics (Mahadevan, 2013); concepts acceptable in both religious and secular contexts. While religious and secular spiritualities have many similarities, the differences lie in the rituals and practices that one may or may not want to be associated with. The concept of God or a transcendent being (Bouckaert & Zsolnai, 2012; McLean, 1994), which most religions ascribe to, may not be present in secular spirituality, as distinctly as it is in religion. The main challenge to bringing spirituality into higher education is this lack of a unified, consensual definition, and understanding of the nuances associated with the term.

Despite these challenges, the growing interest in spirituality within academic and business circles remains, as ethical dilemmas continue to impact the world in numerous ways (Vasconcelos, 2015). To avoid these in the future, government agencies world over are seeking to bring about change within their education systems. The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) in Australia, the Department of Education, Tasmania (2008), and the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQFC, 2013) have developed documents, such as the *Melbourne Declaration 2008*, (DEECD, 2009), where issues of ethics, morals, and spiritual wellbeing are addressed. These documents testify to the importance the government places on spirituality, at least within school education. The *MDEGYA* has existed since 2009, which raises questions about whether teacher education programs in Australia are catering to its aims, and whether business schools are receiving students who demonstrate spiritual wellbeing. If students' spiritual wellbeing is catered to at school level, it may be easier to teach the concept of spirituality in higher education, as those students could have a spiritual base.

To achieve spiritually-based educational outcomes, teachers need to be equipped to teach spiritual concepts effectively. This requires teacher education providers to develop appropriate courses and units that enable teachers to achieve those outcomes. Similarly, organisations now seek to employ professionals with strong value-laden moral compasses and expect higher education to cater to this need (Cunha et al., 2006). As a result, concepts like workplace spirituality, and spiritual-based leadership have emerged, and some organisations expect business education to address these within their curricula (Cunha et al., 2006).

De Souza (2016) asserts that while the Australian curriculum seems to address most student needs, it lacks a holistic approach towards education. She believes that

most schools choose to ignore the development of children as whole individuals, and avoid addressing students' spiritual wellbeing (De Souza, 2016). This could be because teachers are ill-equipped to teach holistically and require training in the area. Natsis (2016) is of the opinion that Australia is now more globalised than ever before and the plurality of cultures, races, nationalities, creeds, and religions within society requires education to address "intrinsic spiritual awareness", and "matters of personal spirituality, meaning and worldview" (p. 66). People experience spirituality in different ways and this should be explored (Radford, 2006) to help identify and develop a language that could be used to teach spirituality (Rego & Cunha, 2008).

Some writers see benefits from teaching spirituality in higher education, yet Crossman (2015b), Lindholm and Astin (2008), and Neal (2013) suggest the evidence is inconclusive, as most literature discusses the teaching of spirituality, but the long-term impact of that teaching has yet to be researched. Nonetheless, most research suggests the best way to incorporate spirituality in higher education is to use a holistic approach (Harris & Crossman, 2005), by integrating it within units that teach concepts associated with spirituality (Crossman, 2015b). Spirituality may also already be being taught by some academics implicitly via the hidden curriculum, as they carry their own spirituality to their classrooms (Harris & Crossman, 2005).

While spirituality is a challenging concept to teach, the pedagogical approaches to teaching it are similar to those used to teach other concepts but require additional factors to be considered. For example, a student-centred pedagogical approach in a safe environment appears most suitable to teach the concept, where the teacher is a facilitator of learning (Lindholm & Astin, 2008; Neal, 2008), and the class size has to be small or involve small groups (McSherry, 2000), that cater to diversity

and everyone's sensitivities (Klenke, 2003). This may be a challenge for higher education where economic constraints lead to large student cohorts.

The interconnection between spirituality and education is important for teacher education (Neal, 2008) and could impact on the development of teachers' professional identities. Within business education, spirituality is considered present in the workplace (Crossman 2015), different leadership theories are based on it (Fry, Latham, Clinebell, & Krahne, 2016), and it may contribute to business graduates' professional identities. However, there is currently a lack of clarity about spirituality's role in the development of education and business graduates' professional identities.

According to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the US (1994) (cited in Podger, 2009, p. 70) "The path toward sustainable development can only be built upon the deep comprehension of humanity's spiritual reality—a reality that lies at the very essence of human beings". The changing global environment requires sustainability and higher education must address the diverse elements of human reality, part of which includes spirituality. This requires overcoming the challenges of developing a definition of spirituality and using a holistic approach towards teaching it within higher education.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the selection of the methodological approach taken to answer the research questions. The research design and its justification will be presented, which involves discussion of the selection of the sample participating in the study, the development of the research interviews used to gather the data for this research, and the data analysis process.

3.2 The Research Questions

In light of the literature review, the following two research questions were developed.

1. How do academics within the faculties of education and business view the concept of spirituality?
2. How do these academics perceive the incorporation of spirituality within their respective curricula and its role in the development of the professional identities of their students?

3.3 Selection of Research Methodology

Based at the University of Tasmania, this study explores the viewpoints of academics from two faculties on the incorporation of spirituality in higher education, and its implication for students' professional development. This required consideration of research methodologies to identify the best approach for answering the research questions. The review of the literature, the context of this study and its participants, and the anticipated variety of views about spirituality suggested that the most appropriate method for generating data would have to be mainly qualitative in nature. Previous studies in the area of spirituality and higher education reveal the use of both quantitative and qualitative research; however, more studies were found to have used qualitative methodology with the use of such methods identified by researchers such as Bernardo, Butcher, and Howard (2014), Kaufman (2008), Kendall (2012), and Ma (2006). One of the main reasons for using a qualitative approach here is that the study is exploratory in nature, and a qualitative approach reveals information that could be presented in both a narrative and interpretive manner. Bogdan and Biklen (1998), Creswell (2013), Denzin and Lincoln (2000), Lemanski and Overton (2011), Lincoln (2010), Morgan and Smircich (1980), and Woods (2006) all support a qualitative approach for exploratory studies involving an examination of viewpoints and opinions.

3.4 Qualitative Research

Before further justifying the methodology for this study, a definition of qualitative research by Denzin and Lincoln (2000) is presented:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (p. 3)

This definition explains the nature of qualitative research by discussing situational context, practices, and data collection methods. It clarifies that the qualitative researcher tries to study the way people perceive things in their natural environments. The research questions of this study imply an examination of the beliefs and practices of individuals working in their own “natural” context. This makes a qualitative approach highly appropriate.

Gilbert and Thomas (2001), Kervin, Vialle, Herrington, and Okely (2006), and Silverman (2001) explain that qualitative research is concerned with making deep sense of social phenomena and provides richer and more complete insights into educational settings, by exploring the nuances and unanticipated influences that cannot be explored through quantitative methods. The complex nature of spirituality and the study’s intended exploration of the experiences and viewpoints of academics—rather than gathering data through objective observation or quantitative measures—make qualitative research the most appropriate approach.

3.5 Approaches to Qualitative Research

Qualitative methods focus on developing an understanding of what people say and do, and the reality of the situation they are in (Gillham, 2000). The different approaches to qualitative research often overlap each other. Five commonly used qualitative research methods are narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study (Creswell, 2013). Some researchers use a combination of these methods to form a multiple methods approach (Woods, 2006). As very little is understood about how academics perceive spirituality, and whether it should be part of higher education curriculum, an exploratory approach underpinned the research. The methods listed above were analysed and a case study approach was deemed to be the most appropriate.

3.5.1 Case Study Research

Yin (2003, p. xi) states that the “case study research method continues to be an essential form of social science inquiry.” There are many differing definitions of case study research, and although there is limited consensus for a single definition (Bassey, 1999; Cavaye, 1996; Gillham, 2000; Stake, 2005), there are some key common features.

To understand what a case study embodies, it is necessary to understand the idea of a “case.” Gillham (2000) and Stake (2005) suggest that a case is a unit (situation or location or context) where human beings act and operate in the real world, in real time, which can be visualised easily, but can only be understood within that particular context. A unit is a system within which people act and issues are highlighted and researched (Tellis, 1997). Yin (2014) describes a case study as:

... An empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. In other words, you would use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions—believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study. (p. 13)

Conducting case study research is, in itself, dynamic in nature, and requires a systematic approach to develop an in-depth understanding of the phenomena being researched (Bassey, 1999; Cavaye, 1996; Merriam, 1998). A case study is a methodological choice, a focused activity that seeks answers in a particular case within a specific situation. The focus is on studying the case by investigating its various aspects in great detail and the data are gathered without explicitly controlling or manipulating the variables. The results generated may or may not be generalizable (Yin, 2014). A case study approach seeks understanding of a situation rather than confirming prior knowledge (Bassey, 1999). It uses a range of sources of information and single or multiple tools for analysis in accordance with the requirements of the case (Cavaye, 1996; Yin, 2014).

A case study not only generates answers to the research question, but also captures the real phenomena being studied in their natural settings (Aaltio, 2010; Merriam, 1998). Additionally, a case study can explore the complexities of a case by studying the influencing variables and processes. This enables researchers to gather insights into phenomena that may then be the subject of more in-depth study (Cavaye, 1996; Noor, 2008). Case studies are beneficial for practical and applied fields like education as they help researchers understand phenomena, and may be generalizable at larger scales or to related contexts (Cavaye, 1996; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2005).

While case studies have their strengths, they also have some weaknesses. For example, case studies can be too narrow in scope and not generalizable because they lack scientific rigour and so may not be reliable (Noor, 2008). Another weakness of the case study method is that it can “oversimplify or exaggerate a situation” (Merriam, 1998, p. 41) so that findings may misrepresent the real contexts (Bassey, 1999). These weaknesses were addressed in this study; firstly, by limiting the number of cases to two, but still with enough difference between the two to hypothesise broader conclusions; and secondly, by developing two pilot instruments to ensure the data would be rich enough to reduce the risk of oversimplification.

3.5.2 Types of Case Studies

There are different types of case studies, which depend on the purposes of the research. They may be associated with fieldwork, which may be exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory in nature, depending on whether they are for theoretical or practical purposes (Yin, 2014). Ethnography, participant observation, naturalistic inquiry, grounded theory, or exploratory research may be conducted using case studies (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2005; Yin, 1981). These in turn can be *single* or *multiple* case studies depending on what one is trying to find out. A single case can be an individual, a group, an organization, an institution, or even a whole community, while a multiple case study would involve more than one of the above mentioned case types, where differences and similarities in processes and outcomes can be studied within a singular constant context or across multiple contexts (Cavaye, 1996; Gillham, 2000). When a case study requires an in-depth exploration of an amorphous issue, an exploratory case study is undertaken. It allows the identification of the

factors involved in the issue and generates more information regarding that problem as a foundation for further research (Thomas, 2011).

In light of the above, the University of Tasmania, a single regional university, was the context or unit, within which the two faculties—the Faculty of Education (FoE) and Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE)—make up two separate sub-units. They are different enough from each other to give two cases—as the discipline areas are different—rendering this a *multiple case study* (Lichtman, 2013; Stake, 2005; Thomas, 2011).

The research was designed to explore academics' viewpoints on spirituality in higher education, making this an *exploratory multiple case study*. It answers the two research questions by exploring the academics' individual viewpoints around spirituality, as influenced by their places in their respective faculties. The insights gained could identify the appropriateness of incorporating the concept of spirituality within faculty curricula, hidden or explicit, and the pedagogical approaches that could be used to teach it. A multiple case study could help identify the similarities and differences within and across the two faculties within the context of a single regional university.

3.6 Rationale for Selecting Education and Business

The literature review chapter reported a number of studies conducted in the area of spirituality within the schools of nursing, law, medicine, education, social science, and business at the university level, including some at the University of Tasmania. Ma's study in Canada (2006) gathered data from all the faculties in a particular university. The data were not rich enough, however, to develop an insight into what academics think the role of spirituality is in higher education. Given the

scope of the concept, the present study was purposefully limited to two faculties. All faculties at the University of Tasmania were considered for the research, but the faculties of education and business were selected after weighing all options. Within the University of Tasmania (UTas), some studies have been conducted within the nursing faculty in the area of mental health (Chidarikire, 2012), and a unit was taught in the arts and humanities, but no research was found in the areas of education or business, two faculties that potentially impact the world through teachers educating citizens and business graduates influencing the management of companies, economies, and employees.

FoE and TSBE teach units at undergraduate and postgraduate levels that include concepts like ethics. At the time of the research, for example, FoE had units called “Education, Ethics and Professional Practice”, “Education for Sustainability across the Curriculum”, and “Social and Emotional Learning”, while TSBE had units called “Workplace Attributes”, “Management Ethics”, and “Management Social Responsibility” (University of Tasmania, 2014).

The Rationale for Selecting the Faculty of Education. According to Ellis (2012, p. 3), “Education is the attainment of knowledge and understanding, creating wisdom that can be applied to jobs, community and life issues”. Hence, it can be said that education impacts civilization in its entirety (Purpel, 1989). The rationale for choosing the Faculty of Education (FoE) at University of Tasmania (UTas) was because of the crucial role of the academics in developing teaching professionals who, in turn, have the potential to shape society (Ellis, 2012). The academics in teacher education help shape the professional identity of future teachers (Vähäsantanen, 2015). Teacher education involves empowering pre-service teachers with knowledge, attitudes, and skills that enable them to get actively involved with their students’

learning. This engagement with students leads to a transformative process (Palmer, 2003) that can guide students towards “stability, security and a sense of meaning and purpose in life” (Taplin, 2014) as required by society at large (Ellis, 2012; Palmer, 2003).

The Faculty of Education offers both undergraduate and graduate courses for pre-service teachers, and attracts mostly Australian students to its face-to-face and online programs. Most of its teacher graduates will go on to teach in primary and secondary schools in Australia. Conducting this study within FoE should give an insight into how teacher educators view spirituality and the role it might play to benefit teacher education. It will also allow these academics to identify whether or not their own spirituality comes into play during their teaching, directly or indirectly. This will help understand whether academics think it is important to teach pre-service teachers in a spiritual way with an awareness of one’s own spirituality and the way it underpins one’s teaching practice, or teach spirituality as an explicit part of the teacher education curriculum to help prepare teachers for their work in the classroom and to develop teachers’ professional identities.

The Rationale for Selecting the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics. Within this faculty, academics empower business students with skills and knowledge for decision-making (Harvey, Fisher, McPhail, & Moeller, 2009), people management (Neal, 2008), and resource management (Basterretxea & Martinez, 2012). This provides students with a competitive advantage within the local and global marketplace. These graduates, through their later business roles, are then responsible for almost all business activities undertaken, ethical or otherwise, and can impact the global economy, both positively and negatively (Basterretxea & Martinez, 2012). This is evidenced in the way business graduates influence the way

organisations function. For example, high-performing organisations may push boundaries for profit maximisation and allow their employees to think “outside the box”, or in ways that are unconventional, sometimes at the cost of ethics, as in the case of Enron (Vasconcelos, 2015). Bouckaert (2015) suggests that “business ethics needs a spiritual foundation” (p. 15) and, as such, a spiritual approach to teaching ethics may help avoid ethical dilemmas in the future. Numerous courses have been developed on leadership, management, and spirituality in universities globally (Basterretxea & Martinez, 2012; Harvey et al., 2009; Neal, 2008), as business graduates have a fundamental impact on the way business is conducted worldwide.

The Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE) at the University of Tasmania provides education to local and international students at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels in the areas of business, management, and economics. It also provides management education to professionals from different backgrounds such as law, nursing, agriculture, and specific industries. The enrolment of some students in TSBE is required by their workplaces to enhance their professional identities and for their career growth. Students from other faculties also enrol concurrently for specific business management programs offered by TSBE. It can be asserted that TSBE courses cater to various professional and organisational needs and that its graduates potentially influence business and society. This justifies the choice of the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics as the other faculty for this research.

Education and business have a significant impact on the daily lives of individuals and thus shape society. It has been suggested that spirituality can help lift society’s ethical, values, and moral base, but perceptions of spirituality’s importance needs to be ascertained, together with the place of spirituality in the educative

processes within these disciplines. Focusing on just these two faculties, within the only university in the state of Tasmania, will begin to provide insight into these issues. Due to insufficient time and resources, opting for more faculties was beyond the scope of this project.

3.7 Participant Sample Selection

Quantitative research seeks generalisable findings and so sample selection is important for effective research design (Robinson, 2014). This requires careful choice of the case, and identifying the “dimensions within the population of interest” (Seawright & Gerring, 2008), and ensuring that the sample selected represents the population (O’Leary, 2004). However, qualitative research is not always generalizable, depending on the nature of the research question, the goals of the study, and the situational context. It requires a strategic sampling process (O’Leary, 2004) to select an appropriate sample (Robinson, 2014; Woods, 2006).

To facilitate data gathering for this study permission was sought from the heads of both faculties to contact potential participants directly and to call for voluntary participation. A sample size of twenty participants was planned, with ten participants per faculty. This was thought sufficient to give insight into various views of the topic of spirituality which was already known to be ambiguous. A lack of surety around whether academics would like to participate in this research meant that the number of participants could not be too ambitious; the limitations around the time and structure of this study also contributed to this decision.

Permission was granted to send out an email inviting all academics within both faculties to participate in the study (see Appendix B). Fifteen participants responded to the email by agreeing to participate in the study. As the number was

insufficient, purposeful sampling methods (Sandelowski, 2000) were then applied. According to (Sandelowski, 2000), “this sampling strategy is employed when there is a very large pool of potentially information-rich cases and no obvious reason to choose one case over another”. Therefore, participants of this study then referred to other academics who could be interested in participating in this study and provide valuable data. This method yielded 22 participants, 11 from each faculty; however, two of them—one from each faculty—withdrawed initially, while one from FoE had a change of mind after the interview was conducted. This resulted in a total of 19 participants: nine from FoE and ten from TSBE. As the data gathered from the 19 participants had resulted in data saturation, with common themes arising in the interviews, it was concluded that interviewing another participant from FoE would be unlikely to produce any significantly useful additional data for the study.

3.8 Demographics of the Sample

Participants in this study were academics teaching within the FoE and the TSBE at the University of Tasmania. Some were full-time, others part-time, or casual employees. Their academic positions were associate professors, lecturers, and tutors at the undergraduate, graduate, or postgraduate levels. Some participants were in management/faculty leadership positions; others were solely supervising PhD students. Participants from both faculties were interviewed individually, but the data generated were considered cumulatively by faculty.

3.8.1 Biographical Data

Only two participants were under the age of 40, and these came from the Faculty of Education. Most participants (14) were male, and so the results from this

study could reflect a male outlook. Cultural/geographical diversity was important for this study, to give insight into diverse viewpoints of spirituality. However, the majority of participants (15) were of Australian origin, which provides a greater insight into Australian viewpoints on spirituality but makes the group less diverse than had been hoped.

3.8.2 Academic Experience

The number of years of academic experience of the participants ranged from six to forty years, with a wide range of experience within and outside academia. Most participants from FoE were in management positions, while TSBE's participants were mostly lecturers or unit coordinators (in charge of a teaching unit/subject). Out of 19 participants, ten were lecturers and unit coordinators, and nine were in management positions, and all were academics, teaching at the university, with two who had retired and were only supervising higher degree students. Two academics in FoE were also already teaching "spirituality" in one of their units.

3.8.3 Beliefs

This study examines the concept of spirituality and information about the participants' belief systems was imperative, as it could influence the academics' viewpoints. For this study, the beliefs data of the participants used these descriptors:

- **Religious:** Person who has any form of religious affiliation; member of a formal organisation or someone who identifies with a religion without a formal organisation.
- **Non-Religious:** Person who does not practise religion, but may believe in God or transcendence, and has some form of a belief system; may be secular or agnostic (unsure of the existence of god)

- Atheist: Person who does not believe in a god (categorised separately from non-religious as the person does not associate with any form of religion or belief system).

The descriptors have been compiled as defined by the participants themselves and may be different from the standard definitions of how people identify themselves with religion or no religion.

Table 3.1 presents the distribution of academics' beliefs in both faculties. Out of 19 participants, eight were religious (42%), five were non-religious (26%), and six were atheist (32%). The overall data reveals that 68% of the participants had some form of affiliation or identified with a religion or believed in a deity. The sample was moderately diverse as some academics came with very strong religious backgrounds and belief systems, while others called themselves atheists and had no belief in religion. Those who called themselves agnostics or secular interchangeably had some personal belief systems but were unsure about their own practices within real life contexts yet considered themselves spiritual.

While the same number of academics identified as religious in both faculties, there were more atheists in TSBE than in FoE. The non-religious academics included those who at one time were practising religion, but with time developed their own philosophies, and identified with more than one religion in terms of basic moral values. Others in this category were in search of spirituality and the transcendent, and had no affiliation with any religion or sect, but had some personal beliefs. With the majority of participants identifying with some form of belief system, the findings from the interviews may have a bias towards a less secular/more religiously-based understanding of spirituality.

Table 3.1

All Participants' Beliefs

Beliefs	FoE	TSBE	Total
Religious	4	4	8
Non-Religious	3	2	5
Atheist	2	4	6

3.9 Research Instruments

A qualitative case study approach can utilise observations, documents, and interviews to generate data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Kervin et al., 2006; Stake, 1995). As this study is exploratory in nature and considers participants' views of an ill-defined concept, it takes the advice of Gilbert and Thomas (2001) who recommend the use of interviews as a method for data collection. This method provides access to the attitudes, feelings, and beliefs of people, and is a standard data collection method. The higher degree research studies of Hood (2001), Kaufman (2008), and Ma (2006), that explored the concept of spirituality, also used interviews to collect data.

According to Babbie (2007, p. 306), "a qualitative interview is essentially a conversation in which the interviewer establishes a general direction for the conversation and pursues specific topics raised by the respondent". Interviews are used to gather information via responses to questions about people's experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge, generally through open-ended questions where responses can be interpreted for the research (Creswell, 2013a; Lemanski & Overton, 2011). This type of data collection method obtains in-depth information from the study participants and is very effective for case study research (Kervin et al., 2006; Stake, 1995).

Interviews may involve single individual conversations, or be conducted with groups. The main interview styles are “structured”, “unstructured”, and “semi-structured” (Creswell, 2013; Lemanski & Overton, 2011; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2014). Structured interviewing requires researchers to follow a structured list of questions, allowing minimal improvisation only if needed. This approach is generally used to test a theory and utilizes closed questions (Creswell, 2013; Lemanski & Overton, 2011; Merriam, 1998). In contrast, semi-structured interviews begin with a set of predefined questions, which are adapted according to the responses of the interviewee. This allows open-ended and targeted questions to probe into the interviewee’s experiences, generating more information than structured interviews (Creswell, 2013; Lemanski & Overton, 2011; Merriam, 1998; Woods, 2006).

To generate data to answer the two research questions, it was decided to use semi-structured interviews for this study. These interviews generate rich data as the participants respond verbally and freely to the research questions (Kervin et al., 2006). The interview questions developed were open-ended but focussed to lead the discussion towards gathering the data required.

3.9.1 Designing the Research Instrument

Interviews for a case study yield rich data, but require extensive planning. The interviewer strives to develop questions that will generate the information required to answer the research questions, while, at the same time, consider other factors that could influence the interview process (Kervin et al., 2006; Merriam, 1998). O’Leary (2004, p. 165) explains that interviewing is a step-by-step process that requires careful planning for different “contingencies”, including the social, cultural, and environmental settings of the interview. The interviewer’s role is crucial in the

process, transforming to an empathic listener enabling the interviewee to feel relaxed, confident, and engaged (Stake, 1995; Woods, 2006; Yin, 2014).

Interview questions were prepared in light of the two research questions, pilot tested twice and finalised. Foster (2013) explains that “a pilot study is a methodological preface to a larger study. It is designed to ‘develop, adapt, or check the feasibility’ of methods and/or to provide evidence for calculating sample size in future research” (p. 1). For this study, a pilot interview was initially conducted with two participants, one from each faculty together. The interview questions were mainly unstructured, with no specific focus, which caused unanticipated emotional distress for one of the participants. One person was unsure of the concept of spirituality, and putting it in an educational context made the participant feel distressed and that person left the interview feeling inadequate. The other participant and the interviewer felt concerned about the effect of the interview questions on the wellbeing of all potential interviewees. As a result, the researcher reviewed the interview questions, and developed more focused questions to generate the information required to address the research questions.

After this modification, five main interview questions around five topics were formulated, as shown in Figure 3.1. These questions were then tested in two separate individual interviews, one from each faculty. This pilot study was successful and generated useful data, although it was not utilised in the main research. Pilot studies are generally used to test the research instrument, and the data generated are usually too limited to be used in the main study (Foster, 2013). However, the pilot study participants also participated in the main study, but as sufficient time had elapsed between the two interviews, the data generated for the main study were different and richer and therefore usable.

The pilot work suggested that, due to the sensitive nature of this study, the interview process would benefit by giving participants a copy of the questions and topics to be covered beforehand. Hence, all participants were sent a copy of the interview schedule with the preamble prior to the interview. The interviews were audio-recorded digitally, transcribed professionally, and sent to the interviewees for member-checking, to ensure the accuracy of the interviews (Creswell, 2013; Kervin et al., 2006).

3.10 The Interview Schedule

As discussed above, all participants of this study were provided with the topics and interview questions before the interview. The interview schedule not only guides the interviewer towards the data to be generated, but also prompts the potential questions and probes that can encourage the interviewee to think deeper. During interviews, discussions may lead the interviewee away from the issues and the interview schedule helps steer it back (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Thomas, 2011). The interview schedule for this study included a preamble and the five questions that would be asked during the interviews, and is presented in Figure 3.1.

Preamble

The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (2008, p. 09) talks explicitly about developing “confident and creative individuals who have a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual wellbeing.”

Partly in response to this aim, this study is exploring the role of spirituality in education. However, it is important for you to understand that in agreeing to be interviewed I’m not expecting you to confirm or deny any preconceptions that you may think I’m expecting to hear. It is important for you to know that anything you say about spirituality is immensely valuable and you will never be asked to justify.

Interview Questions

1. When you think about spirituality, what are some of the ideas, connotations and experiences that come to your mind?
2. When you think about each of these elements and ideas that are related to spirituality, how do you consider the differences between spirituality, ethics and morals and values?
3. In what ways do you embody these spiritual aspects, and how do they influence your pedagogical thinking in teaching?
4. How would you build a curriculum that could incorporate some of the concepts associated with spirituality and how would you teach them?

Would you do it directly or indirectly?
5. In what ways do you feel these aspects may influence the development of your students’ identities as professionals?

Figure 3.1 The interview schedule with the preamble and questions asked for this study

The first two questions provide data that can help to answer RQ 1: “How do academics within the faculties of education and business view the concept of spirituality?” These questions allowed the academics to reflect on their understanding of spirituality and explored what it could mean to them as individuals and as professionals, and within society at large.

Questions 3, 4, and 5 sought answers for RQ 2: “How do these academics perceive the incorporation of spirituality within their respective curricula and its role in the development of the professional identities of their students?” These questions were intended to allow academics to reflect on whether they embodied spirituality, identify the way they may have used it within their teaching, and discuss the role it could play within their respective curricula to help develop students as professionals.

3.11 The Research Design

Figure 3.2 depicts the research design for this research. The unit or context for this exploratory, multiple case study is the University of Tasmania, within which the Faculty of Education (FoE) and the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE) are situated. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews from academics, by exploring five key topics: spirituality; ethics, morals, and values; curriculum; pedagogical approaches; and professional identities. The resulting data analysis identified topics, themes, and subthemes that answered the two research questions.

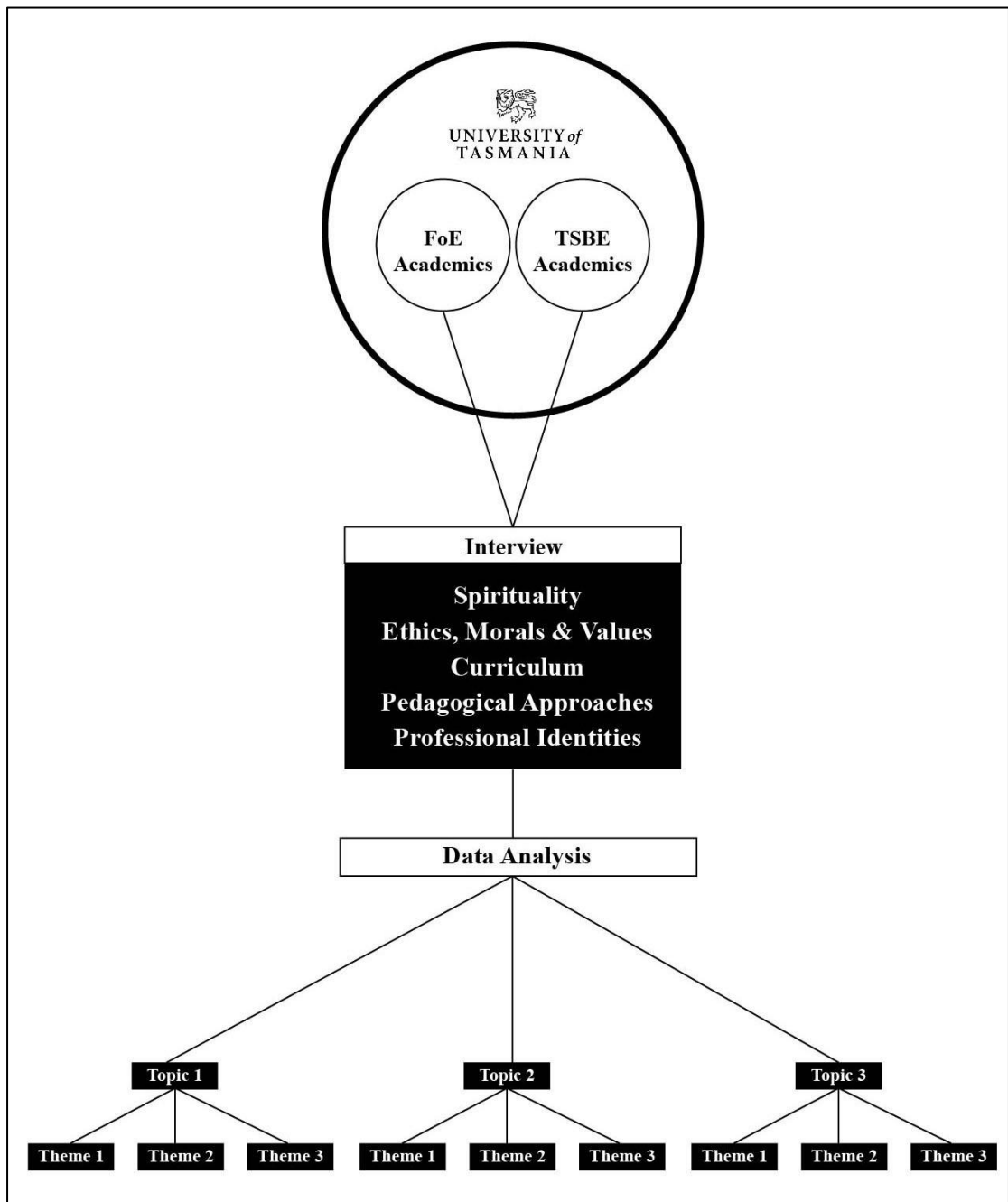


Figure 3.2 A diagrammatic representation of the design for this multiple exploratory case study research at UTas, within the FoE and TSBE

3.12 Human Research Ethics Committee Approval

According to the The National Health and Medical Research Council (2013, p. 3), “Human research is research conducted with or about people, or their data or

issue”. Therefore, whenever any research involving human beings is being planned and conducted, the guidelines provided by the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, Australia and the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) must be followed (see Appendix A).

This case study involved gathering data from academics in their workplace, and required HREC approval. To achieve this, a minimum risk ethics application was completed, with a detailed explanation of the plans and procedures involved in the study and sent to the Faculty of Education Research Ethics Coordinators for approval. This form included the email to be sent to the heads of the schools, the email for the participants, the consent form, an information sheet, and the interview schedule. After modifying the application based on their suggestions, the form was submitted to the University of Tasmania HREC, and, following final approval, pilot studies and then the final interviews were able to be conducted for data collection.

3.13 Data Collection

3.13.1 Individual interviews

After ethics approval was received, the participants of the study were invited officially to participate in an interview, intended to be no more than sixty minutes long. However, as the topic engaged participants, some of the interviews ran longer, as the open-ended questions allowed the participants to discuss their thoughts in detail.

Interviewers need to be empathetic listeners to notice cues that suggest the need for further probes (Kervin et al., 2006; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Woods, 2006; Yin, 2014). The interviews were conducted in the participants’ offices in their

work environments, at a time convenient to them. Since the University of Tasmania is a regional university, there were participants away from the main campus who were willing to have online interviews via the university's digital audio-visual communication program, Lync, in their offices. Three interviews were conducted via Lync calls which were also audio-taped on Lync and transcribed.

Before starting the interview, a comfortable environment for the participants had to be created, as most of them were unknown to me, the interviewer. During the introduction, they were asked about their careers and anything else they would like to share. I discussed my studies and the career path that led me to do this study, which seemed to make the participants comfortable and able to talk freely. Although the interview used open-ended questions, care had to be taken that the participants were not led to give responses that affirmed the views of the interviewer or the ideas found in the literature (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Woods, 2006). To clarify this further, Yin (2014, p. 110) states that researchers have

two jobs throughout the interview process: a) to follow your own line of inquiry, as reflected by your case study protocol, and (b) to ask your actual (conversational) questions in an unbiased manner that also serves the needs of your line of inquiry.

To achieve this, the interviewees were free to say whatever they wanted and they were informed about this at the beginning of the formal interview, while, at the same time, care was taken that they did not go off topic. It was noted that almost all interviewees found it challenging to respond to the first question initially, but as they got comfortable with the topic, they started to reflect and by the end of the interview sufficient data was gathered to address all the interview questions.

Although adding other research instruments such as surveys and focus group interviews was considered, in order to attempt triangulation, the data saturation from the 19 interviews did not suggest a need for this.

3.14 Data Analysis

According to Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998), data analysis is a complex and continuous process that begins as soon as researchers try to make sense or give meaning to the information gathered for their study. It is about researchers examining something, interpreting their understanding, and then presenting that information to others (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014).

As discussed, data were gathered from 19 academics in the faculties of FoE and TSBE. Most interviews lasted for about 60 minutes, with two that lasted for nearly two hours. The interviews were audio-taped. The transcribed interview data were rechecked to add emotional and other nonverbal aspects for deeper understanding. This was done by listening to the interviewees' voice modulation and word emphases, which allowed a better understanding of the words on the transcripts, which potentially had different meanings without the emotional or verbal cues.

According to Merriam (1998, p. 178), "data analysis is the process of making sense out of the data, [...] and involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read." The process of data analysis begins as soon as something is taken apart to give it meaning (Stake, 1995) and is a complex process (Merriam, 1998). The data analysis process in this study was also very complex and required a number of steps to generate concrete outcomes in the form of concepts, themes, and subthemes. Figure 3.3 demonstrates the step-by-step data analysis process used in this study.

The process began by de-identifying the participants by providing each one with a fictitious name that was not necessarily gender-aligned to the participants. The nine participants from the Faculty of Education (FoE) were assigned names beginning with the letters A-I, while the remaining ten participants from the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE) were assigned names beginning with Q-Z. There were more Australian participants in the study and so the names associated with most initial letters are Anglo-Saxon, although they are not associated specifically with the participants' background. The first step was to analyse the participants' demographical data, predominantly by simple frequency counts.

After this, each interview question was analysed to identify and categorise similar concepts discussed by each individual, with a view to identifying significant themes. The data were coded, a term used to describe how the raw data gathered were categorized thematically. The idea was to identify concepts in the data, and code the data according to a descriptor describing the concepts being expressed. This was expected to generate a large number of possibly overlapping concepts. These concepts were then consolidated into themes and subthemes, associated with three major topics that reflected the research questions: the nature of spirituality, spirituality and higher education, and teaching spirituality. Details are provided in the rest of this section.

The coding process was originally done by using the software NVivo, which is used for qualitative data analysis (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011). However, the complexity and the extensive data gathered for this study created technical issues with Nvivo, which was then only used to analyse the participants' demographical data. This resulted in analysing the majority of the remaining data manually within Microsoft (MS) Office *Word* and *Excel*.

MS *Word* was used to identify and highlight the concepts discussed in interview questions using the data from the transcripts for each participant. Table 3.2 demonstrates this with excerpts from transcripts from three participants in the Faculty of Education (FoE). Concepts associated with “religion and spirituality” were identified and highlighted, arising from the first interview question.

Table 3.2

Coding of data manually from three participants from FoE

1. And so one way of thinking about spirituality, one way I’m using that word is to do with notions of God and religion. I’ve come to, quite a while ago, come to a point where I separate church and the notion of God traditional Christian religious beliefs and when they say spirituality, they can say like a this is where they are going to be, praying and reading the Bible and that sort of thing, they see that is spiritual wellbeing.
2. For me, it is when people say spirituality, it is about religion. That’s the first thing that comes to my mind is religion. However, if you think about it and discuss it with little bit more detail, religion is an aspect and therefore spirituality can be encompassing of many other different things. I think lot of people think first off they go oh, you’re talking about religion, or it can get a sort of confused and tied into that sort of thing.
3. I guess when thinking about spirituality, I think what sort of comes straight to mind is more of a case of organized religion. So, partly because I came from a Catholic background, my parents were refugees and came from a very strong Catholic tradition.

These highlighted concepts were then compiled into another *Word* document, with each concept as a heading for a column in a table. Quotes related to the concepts were included in those tables with the associated academic’s pseudonym. This helped identify the participants having similar concepts and ideas, and these similar concepts and ideas were consolidated into the subthemes used in this study. Table 3.3 is an example of a stage in this data analysis process, showing the concepts that were identified from two of the transcripts, for the theme, “spirituality and religion”. Participants’ quotes that presented those concepts were placed in the table with their

pseudonym. For example, the first participant (who was participant A) specifically talked about “no cohesive definition of spirituality,” and “religion,” while the second participant (participant C) talked about “God” in addition to “no cohesive definition of spirituality.”

Table 3.3

Coding of data from two FoE participants for “spirituality and religion”

Participant	No cohesive definition of spirituality	Religion	God	Otherly	Bigger than life	Prayer
A	There is certainly no set of cohesive, or no cohesive set of beliefs about what spirituality is and how it can be positively developed that I’m aware of	And so one way of thinking about spirituality, one way I’m using that word is to do with notions of God and religion. I’ve come to, quite a while ago, come to a point where I separate church and the notion of God traditional Christian religious beliefs and when they say spirituality, , they can say like a this is where they are going to be you know, praying and reading the Bible and that sort of thing, they see that is spiritual wellbeing. But I think, for others, it still means something, it has purpose.				
C	A lot of them seem to refer to a feeling of unity with the world. You know I am at one with the world, and there are philosophical precedents for this, Schopenhaur is one		The society’s inclination to say that as I might have said last time, about these things I am pretty much a Neitzchian. So I tend to look at the world and say you tell me that you believe in God but if you believed in God, you wouldn’t act like this. You either do believe in God but refuse to participate in the kind of life that your God would choose for you to participate in or you don’t really believe in God and you’re just telling me you do.			

The concepts associated with “spirituality and religion” were refined by identifying those that were similar or had similar underpinnings to them. The concepts were then transferred to *Excel* spreadsheets similar to Table 3.4, which shows the

different concepts that were coded under “religion and spirituality” and the participants who talked about them.

Table 3.4

The codes separated and identified as concepts relating to religion and spirituality from participants of FoE

#	Subthemes	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Broad construct					✓		✓		
2	No cohesive definition of spirituality	✓		✓						
3	Religion	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	God			✓	✓			✓	✓	
5	Otherly						✓			
6	Bigger than life						✓			
7	Prayer					✓				
16	Difficult to talk about					✓			✓	
31	Way of life									✓
33	Metaphysical		✓	✓						
36	Meditation	✓						✓		
40	Spiritual Wellbeing	✓								✓

To help categorise each subtheme, the two research questions were then examined. The subthemes were consolidated by identifying commonalities and condensing them into a few subthemes that were further analysed to establish the nine, main themes of this study. The themes that were similar in nature were further grouped, resulting in three topics that addressed the two research questions. For each of the three main topics that emerged there were three themes, each with a few subthemes associated with them.

The three topics and the themes that emerged aligned with the questions posed during the interview, which is not surprising. Although the interview questions were semi-structured, they already reflected some elements of the themes as they were intended to generate answers for the two research questions naturally.

The final step in the data analysis process was to identify and collate the subthemes associated with each theme and organise them into tables for each faculty within MS *Word*. These concepts were then tick marked against each faculty's participants' corresponding pseudonym initial letter in an MS *Excel* spreadsheet for each subtheme and theme. Some of these were further analysed and combined with other subthemes. Table 3.5 demonstrates the final data compiled for “spirituality and religion” in FoE (see also Table 4.4).

Table 3.5

The final subthemes identified for the theme “spirituality and religion” from FoE

Subthemes	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Religion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
God or The Metaphysical	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Prayer and Meditation	✓	✓			✓		✓		
Connections, Service and Altruism	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

To further identify the total number of participants' responses in each faculty, a table with the cumulative data of both faculties was also created. This allowed identification of the similarities and differences across the two faculties.

3.15 Challenges during Data Collection

There were a number of challenges to data collection for this study. Some of these challenges are listed below.

1. The vagueness of the word spirituality itself made data collection a challenge, as the participants were unclear of its meaning within the context of this study.
2. The interview questions were tested twice in order to refine the wording of the final five questions. As discussed, one participant of the first pilot

study found the initial questions that were open to interpretation emotionally distressing, which was not the intent of this study. The refinement of the interview appeared to resolve this issue.

3. The interview questions were sent to all participants to avoid any skewing of data, prompted by one participant's request to be able to come to the interview prepared. However, not all of the participants read the questions before the interview and a few of them struggled with their responses.
4. The interviews were conducted within the academics' work environments, but due to a relocation process some participants did not have the proper workspace for the interviews and struggled to accommodate the interview with their schedules.
5. Due to campus geography, busy schedules, and the fact that some academics took more than the allocated time during the interviews, there were times when the interview process felt rushed.
6. Although the time allocated was a maximum of sixty minutes, a few academics spoke for over an hour, while one spoke for over two hours.
7. Some participants were not on a local campus and it was not possible to conduct face-to-face interviews. Interviews with those participants were taken online, instead. This was challenging for some participants as they were unaware of how *Lync* could be used on their computers for the interview.
8. One challenge was a personal one. Spirituality is a sensitive subject and detaching myself from the concept during the interview process required personal effort. The greater challenge was during the transcription and data

analysis process, where examining the data became emotionally challenging and stressful at times.

These challenges demonstrate that a concept like spirituality is confronting in itself especially if the investigative questions are too open ended. This was demonstrated by the participant of the pilot study who had to leave the interview due to the distress the questions caused, and the interview had to be concluded. Similarly, the first participant of the study requested for the interview schedule prior to the interview to be able to think about spirituality, and despite sending the questions to all academics after that interview, some participants were unable to respond to those questions early on during the interview. Interestingly, some other academics took more than the allocated time because they just wanted to continue talking despite reminding them of the time and eventually, I had to inform them of the next interview that was lined up and that I needed to go, and they reluctantly stopped asking me to come back again. For me too, as the researcher, investigating this concept required me to detach myself from my own understanding of spirituality, and the concepts explored in this study.

Despite these challenges, the data gathered were sufficient to address the research questions. The experiences and insights from this process may be beneficial for future researchers interested in exploring the concept of spirituality, especially in higher education, where, despite careful planning, things may not go as planned and may become stressful.

3.16 Conclusion

Exploring academics' viewpoints on the role of spirituality in higher education required a well-designed research methodology. This chapter has discussed the

research methodology and methods used to generate data for this study. The exploratory nature of this study made a qualitative multiple case study approach the most suitable. Most academics in both faculties had similar viewpoints in a number of areas which led to data saturation, and no value could be added by using other research instruments, the possibility for which had been considered during the initial design of the study. Concepts associated with themes and subthemes seemed to overlap at times, making it challenging to code but MS *Word* and *Excel* helped identify the similarities and differences effectively.

The data analysis process resulted in the emergence of three main topics, each with three themes, and subthemes, for each faculty. Each topic is discussed in one of the next three chapters, which present and analyse the data in detail, and discuss that data in light of the literature in response to the two research questions. Chapter 4 presents academics viewpoints on the concept of spirituality, suggesting the various concepts associated with it. Chapter 5 presents the way academics standpoints on the inclusion of spirituality within the higher education curriculum, especially within the faculties of Education and Business. Chapter 6 discusses academic's perceptions on the pedagogical approaches to teaching spirituality and whether or not spirituality could impact their students' professional identities.

Chapter 4

The Nature of Spirituality

4.1 Introduction

As discussed in the previous chapter, academics from the Faculty of Education (FoE) and the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE) were interviewed to collect data to answer the two research questions for this study. A number of concepts and ideas emerged during the interviews. These were compiled in a tabular form, allowing the identification of subthemes which were, in turn, consolidated into main themes within the three key topics which are the subject of this and the next two chapters.

The topic being discussed in this chapter is “The Nature of Spirituality”. As shown in Figure 4.1, the three themes that emerged from the concepts discussed by the participants were “Defining Spirituality”, “Spirituality and Religion”, and “Secular Spirituality”. Each theme is addressed in a subsection of this chapter, beginning with an overview of the associated subthemes, which are presented in tables. Each table indicates the participants and the subthemes they discussed, by faculty. Each table is followed by a description of the data supported by academics’ quotes. A comparative analysis of the data from both faculties is then presented,

together with a discussion in light of the literature reviewed. As academics raised issues not considered by the researcher prior to the interviews, new literature additional to that already discussed in the literature review needs to be considered.

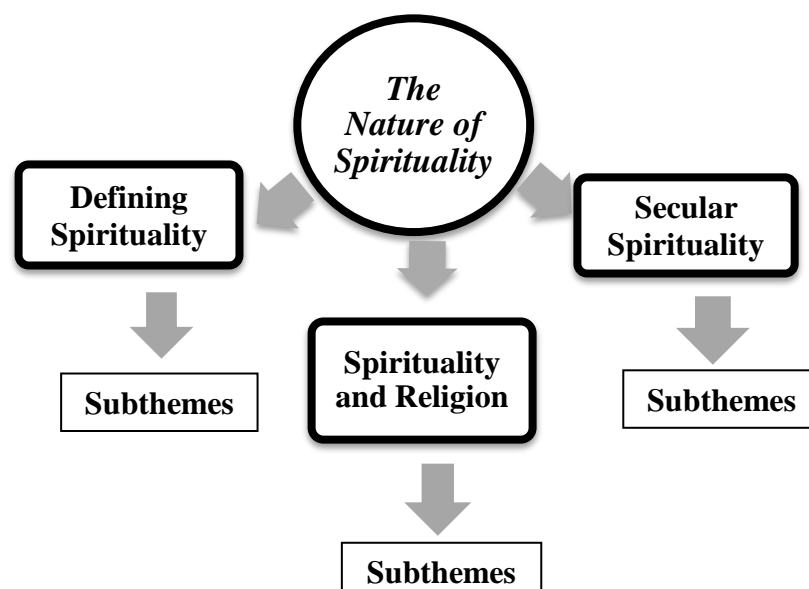


Figure 4.1. A diagrammatical representation of the first topic, “The Nature of Spirituality” with the themes and subthemes

As discussed, all participants for this study were assigned a pseudonym. Participants from FoE have names beginning with the letters A to I, while participants from TSBE have names beginning with Q to Z. The pseudonyms assigned do not necessarily reflect the cultural or gender characteristics of each participant. The initial letter of each pseudonym is used to represent the participants in the tables. Some of the direct quotes from the academics have been edited and the symbol [...] has been used to indicate that words have been omitted.

4.2 Theme 1: Defining Spirituality

The first theme concerned issues associated with defining spirituality. Most participants found defining spirituality challenging, especially when they were informed that no specific definition had been used for this study. The participants were asked to reflect on their understanding of spirituality and present their viewpoints without being influenced in any way. Many found it difficult to respond to this at first, with the interviewer's initial question asking them to reflect on their thoughts about spirituality, but they were able to elaborate on their ideas as the interview progressed through the other questions. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 show the viewpoints of academics from FoE and TSBE, respectively, regarding the definition of spirituality and the concepts associated with it. Table 4.3 presents an overall view of the concepts discussed by academics from each faculty.

4.3 Faculty of Education (FoE)

Data analysis reveals that six academics in FoE were of the opinion that there is no cohesive definition of spirituality and that it is a broad construct. All academics discussed the concept of ethics being directly or indirectly associated with spirituality. Six participants also connected values to spirituality and stated that they used the terms morals and values interchangeably. Only one academic in FoE directly related morals to spirituality. While all academics were of the opinion that the four concepts of ethics, morals, values, and spirituality are different in nature, they are interconnected and three academics used the four concepts interchangeably. Three participants believed that spirituality is a holistic way of life and cannot be measured. Three participants also talked about spirituality being associated with the concepts of

behaviour, justice, and diversity, and four participants discussed cultural spirituality and highlighted the spiritual practices of three cultures. Three participants also discussed the concept of spiritual wellbeing as being spirituality. Two participants associated spirituality with attributes of children, with one describing it as child-like, capturing a sense of innocence, and the other describing it as childish suggesting being immature and in a negative way. One academic asserted that using the word spirituality outside religious contexts is inappropriate, which is the reason why people find it difficult to define. Table 4.1 gives the data for these subthemes.

Table 4.1

FoE Academics' Viewpoints on Defining Spirituality

Subthemes	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
No clear definition of spirituality, being a broad construct	x		x		x		x	x	x
Holistic way of life	x			x					x
Ethics	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Values	x	x	x		x	x	x		
Morals					x	x	x		
Behaviour, justice, and diversity	x				x		x		
Cultural spirituality		x	x		x			x	
Spiritual wellbeing	x					x			x
Childish or child-like	x		x						
“Spirituality” is a word inappropriate to use in different contexts			x						

Description of the Data

4.3.1 No Clear Definition of Spirituality; a Broad Construct

One issue that arose in the literature and during data collection was the lack of a clear, universally recognised definition of spirituality. The participants from FoE

had varied understandings of the term, but most agreed that spirituality is a broad construct that has its roots in religion. Some participants were of the opinion that spirituality could mean different things to different people and, as such, they were unable to define spirituality.

One of the participants, Alex, elucidated, “There is certainly no cohesive set of beliefs about what spirituality is and how it can be positively developed that I’m aware of.” Ellen explained that spirituality “is a broad construct, and it evolves in people over time. [...] People have a spiritual dimension, [...] even though they might not recognize it.” Six of the nine participants in FoE believed that spirituality is a broad construct and there is no cohesive definition of spirituality.

4.3.2 Holistic Way of Life

Three participants—Alex, Danny, and Ivan—were of the opinion that spirituality is a way of life, and gives a “holistic” outlook to the way people live. Danny and Ivan, who also taught spiritual wellbeing, felt that spirituality is individualistic, and a way of life that makes sense to them, individually. Ivan explained,

So many people in Australia don’t have a religious base, but they could say that they have a spiritual way of living, [...] and certain beliefs that they will live their lives by. They’re always honest; they have a raft of different things that would come into it. [...] My way of explaining it is to say that it is a way of thinking, living, acting, believing; not necessarily based on a religious perspective, but a holistic way of looking at life.

Alex also believed that spirituality is a holistic way of life, but added that it is not measurable. He explained that although science can clarify a lot of things, there are certain ideas like spirituality that science itself cannot identify, yet they exist. Spirituality is an important part of being human but is without scientific evidence.

4.3.3 Ethics, Values, Morals, and Spirituality

All nine participants from FoE were of the opinion that ethics, values, morals and spirituality have distinct identities, but are interconnected in some ways. Some academics stated that they used these concepts interchangeably. Carol explained that because of “the genealogy of values, of morals and ethics, I’ll use those words interchangeably. [...] Not sure how morals and ethics are different, not sure how values and morals and ethics are different.” Similarly, Ivan said,

To me, ethics links to morals links to values, links to philosophy, links to the way you live your life. So, very hard to separate. Definitely a part of spirituality, definitely a part of or having an influence on some of those other domains of health, particularly emotional health.

Bailey, Carol, Grace, Hayden, and Ivan were of the same opinion, that there is no distinction among the four and that they all are associated with the philosophies around which people live their lives. Bailey highlighted, however, that people can be inconsistent in aligning them: “values, and morals, and ethics should reflect and be consistent with someone’s spirituality, and I don’t think it’s normally, necessarily always the case.” Danny explained his view of the interconnectedness of the four concepts, stating

People’s spiritual values are connected with their own morals and values that are established through life experiences. [...] So, those

people who have had connections with religion take on both the morals and values of their religion. For me, my morals and values come from my family and the other experiences that have shaped who I am. I think the way some people connect spiritually is also how they develop their morals and values.

The data reveal that some participants seemed unsure of distinctions amongst the three concepts of ethics, morals, and values, and perceived them to be interconnected with spirituality. Most academics felt that these four concepts shape people's behaviours, reflecting their philosophies of life.

While all participants believed that ethics, morals, values, and spirituality were interlinked, Grace's opinion changed during the interview. To start with she argued that ethics, morals, values, and spirituality were interlinked, but on further reflection, she explained that morality drives ethical behaviour, which can be internalised, but she was not sure of the connection with spirituality.

Some participants also discussed ethics, morals, values, and spirituality individually. The next subsections look at each of these concepts on their own.

Ethics. All nine participants discussed the concept of ethics. When asked to discuss ethics' relationship with spirituality, all agreed that it was about doing the right things, especially when dealing with others. Bailey and Ellen stated that ethics is about deciding to *do the right thing*. Bailey explained that people's belief systems affect the way they behave towards others and their ethics may come from there.

Bailey, Carol, Danny, Fran, Grace, and Ivan discussed how ethics underpins the way they live their lives and interact with others. Carol explained that she infuses ethics in every aspect of her life, not because of a spiritual world or a God, but because that is the way she is. She treats everyone, including children, with respect.

Fran and Grace were of the same opinion, adding that they try for maximum benefit and to do the least harm. For them, ethics projects their behaviour to others, such as treating people fairly and honestly.

Alex and Hayden were of the opinion that ethics is about *being human* in a community, and one's role in society. Alex explained,

That means it's affected by the awareness of your social group, the community and who you are within that; the sorts of responsibilities you have, and so on. But I feel it most effectively [...] when I'm able to enact some trueness of myself, because I have a desire to be accepted by people, that's why I accept the need to treat them ethically.

He further added, "It's about knowing that the role you're playing is right and in that sense, I think that the appropriate ethics are implied." Danny and Ivan believed that while ethics are guidelines for living a good life, ethical standards may differ amongst people. Ellen discussed the concept of ethical decision-making as social justice, which may or may not be associated with religion or spirituality. She explained,

They [ethical decision-making and social justice] are dimension that belong to that cluster of dimensions, which is spirituality, religiosity, and ethics, [...] and they are stronger now. So, while we have a reduction in religious instruction, we have had a growth in ethical decision-making. It's almost like there is a counter balance and that's the ethical decision-making policy, and a very strong social justice model.

Ellen further asserted that this has raised many questions relating to people's behaviour towards others, determining the right thing to do, and the consequences of

not making ethical decisions. From the academics' viewpoints, ethics is about doing the right thing.

Values. Some participants explained that values underpin the way people live their lives and can vary for different people. Ellen explained, "Values are value-laden, and the question you always have to ask is, whose values are they? There's no such thing as valueless values. Everyone has values that come from a particular philosophy."

Bailey believed that values are what people think are important; they may be family, nature, or anything else, and they flow from belief and spirituality. Similarly, Carol was of the opinion that values can be observed in peoples' behaviour and action. She felt that people have different values, and that makes them who they are and governs how they act. Their actions demonstrate the attitude and values they hold. Alex also discussed how people's actions demonstrate their values, and that others make judgements associated with them.

In the Australian society, you realize that people will make judgements based on what football team you go for, or what car you drive or what music you listen to and for me, it was also to do with appearance. I liked to have long hair or wore sort of hippie clothes. I went to Sydney University, a very conservative residential college, which was all men. They were all very "blokey" and I was told that because of the way I dressed I didn't belong there.

While confirming her lack of association with any religion, Carol acknowledged that her own values conform to those of Christianity and Buddhism. In contrast, Fran believed that values are very different from spirituality and explained, "values are ways that are more right than other ways of being in the world, and

kinder, and more considerate, and more generous. To me, those are values I can teach. I can model values.” She further added, “Spirituality is more nebulous and harder to put,” and “is a way of more understanding the world and my position in it. I can’t model it, but I can be spiritual.” To Fran, values seem to be similar to ethics, in that they are about doing the right thing, with an emphasis on what people value in their lives and can influence on their behaviours towards others.

Morals. Most participants described morals as being similar to ethics and values. They were of the opinion that it is about what is right or wrong in terms of code of conduct or behaviour. Ellen and Fran discussed morals in terms of justice and behaviour towards others. Both participants discussed the Judeo-Christian teachings of “ye shall not steal, ye shall not do this, and ye shall not do that”. Grace talked about morals in relation to the way she views her own behaviour towards others. She explained,

Morals, to me, is how I view my behaviour. [...] I don’t stand up for all the women or the old lady on the bus because that’s what I was taught to do as a kid, but because I know it’s the right thing to do, and my morality is not a codified thing. It probably does go back, [...] this is what you do, that’s right. It’s beaten into you as a kid, particularly coming from a well indoctrinated Catholic background.

While only one academic discussed the concept of morals separately, she seemed unclear about its distinction from the other three concepts. She explained that other academics defined ethics and values interchangeably, but she wasn’t sure about morals. One wonders whether there is a lack of clarity of the terms amongst the participants or if they just viewed them as similar, despite the subtle differences discussed by each participant. Perhaps academics view ethics, values, morals, and

spirituality as being interconnected with each other as they focus on the way people live their lives and behave towards others.

4.3.4 Behaviour, Justice, and Diversity

Three participants discussed spirituality as being associated with behaviour, justice, and diversity. Alex explained that the way people behave towards others demonstrates their spiritual health and so relates to spirituality. Grace explained that ethics, morals, and values shape people's behaviour and these concepts originally come from religion, and are thus related to spirituality in some way.

Ellen stated that the concepts of justice and diversity come from Judeo-Christian belief systems, where there are laws to protect people from wrongdoing. She explained, "The Judeo-Christian values [...] underpin our legal system [which] is based on two types of justice. One of them is retributive justice [...] and [the other is] social justice." Relating spirituality and social justice, she adds, "I think the social justice elements of spirituality are important, and my sense is that we have to make people, citizens who understand diversity, tolerance, consequences, and also to be active citizens." Ellen shared her own experience, saying, "the spirituality elements of mine tended to be based on that notion of what is justice and less in terms of, I suppose, prayer, I didn't pray for my faculty, but I used to think about my faculty, and certainly I used to reflect on tentative decisions."

4.3.5 Cultural Spirituality

Cultural spirituality was discussed by four academics, and relates to spirituality viewed within different cultures and may be religious or secular. Carol explained the meaning of culture and how it can be used or misused: "culture is a respect for humanity, culture is the respect for the creative possibilities that human

beings are capable of and the respect for those products; whatever those products might be; respect for human endeavour.”

Talking about the different contexts that may have an effect on cultural spirituality, Hayden explained that people focus on the socio-psychological aspect of culture, but forget that spirituality and religion are always in the background somewhere. Some of the academics discussed examples of what they perceived as cultural spirituality. Two of them, Aboriginal and Chinese spiritualities, were very specific, while the third, which was termed Cultural Christianity by the person who referred to it, did not seem to correlate with actual spiritual ideas but rather with traditions and activities.

Aboriginal Spirituality. Two participants, Carol and Ellen, discussed Australian Aboriginal spirituality. Talking about her understanding of this spirituality, Ellen explained that Aboriginal spirituality is more about one's place in nature and Earth Mother or Gaia. “There's a notion of trying to understand you in your environment, and understanding ‘you’ within your space to nature and the earth.” Ellen also explained that Aboriginal spirituality is also about connecting with Gaia, and taking care of it when using its resources because, within the Aboriginal culture, the world and the spirit world are one. She further explained that Aboriginal people's sense of spirituality is much stronger than people of other faiths, having a strong sense of past relatives, place, and spirits working with them as they also communicate with their ancestors, and call them for help.

Carol had a very strong negative opinion about Aboriginal spirituality. She believed that the metaphysical concepts used in Aboriginal spiritual stories, to explain realities, are irrational. She also felt that as these primitive societies have evolved, these stories should also have evolved and rationalised. Carol felt that Aboriginal

spirituality was “totally misguided, completely misguided, infantile, a primitive grasp of reality. Pre-enlightenment [...]. If any group of folk believes in that kind of a spiritual world, that to me is just primitive and therefore uninteresting.” She felt that this kind of spirituality is uninteresting because science has discovered how primitive communities have evolved.

Chinese Spirituality. Ellen and Hayden discussed Chinese spirituality, as they understood it. Ellen stated that Chinese culture is based on superstitions and relates to the spirit world. She talked about experiencing the Chinese New Year in South East Asia, where she went out and celebrated all the rituals with her colleagues, but was unable to connect with their spirituality. She also discussed other aspects of Chinese cultural spirituality, which include Feng Shui, and the Chinese calendar with animal symbols, but was critical of them, as she believed them to be superstitions rather than spirituality.

Hayden talked about Chinese spirituality, explaining that Chinese spiritual activities play an important role within their personal family relationships and are part of the Chinese culture. Chinese spirituality is carried over within the Chinese culture when they migrate to other countries.

Cultural Christianity. According to Ellen, cultural Christians are people who celebrate some aspects of Christianity, but are not Christians. They practise Christian rituals as part of their culture, but are unable to connect with any theological or spiritual aspects. Ellen discussed this phenomenon within Australia:

Values in the Australian context often have a Judeo-Christian belief, even though a lot of people become what they refer to as cultural Christians. They recognize Christmas and Easter, give Christmas

presents and Easter eggs, but they actually don't understand the meaning or the symbolism behind it.

People adapt to religious cultural practices when they interact with people from other cultures and people of other beliefs. Ellen explained, "There's a differentiation between cultural spirituality and a spirit in what you believe. You could be a cultural spiritualist person who does x, because that's the cultural expectations but you don't really believe in it." Hayden explained that he had an experience with some of his Muslim students who came to visit him at Christmas and they shared food with his family, and adapted to their rituals that day. Hayden felt that it was a learning experience for all as they got to know more about each other's religious cultures. He added that this enables people to try and fit in within each other's cultural social norms respectfully, and they may adapt some aspects that they feel comfortable with. Ellen believed that people in Fiji are cultural Christians explaining that people there have incorporated some indigenous cultural concepts within their very strong cultural Christian spirituality. These people have totems, and interact with them to predict events and happenings. They also seek guidance from elders and have a relatively simple way of life.

Cultural spirituality involves activities based on various spiritual practices, often influenced by a religion; they incorporate different cultural norms, but may not be associated with the transcendent concepts associated with the sort of spirituality being explored in this study.

4.3.6 Spiritual Wellbeing

Another concept that emerged when talking about spirituality was spiritual wellbeing. Danny and Ivan had been teaching spiritual wellbeing as one of the

domains of health education, and both academics discussed spiritual wellbeing in a similar fashion. However, Ivan used the phrase “spiritual wellbeing” interchangeably with spirituality

Talking about spiritual wellbeing, Ivan stated that spiritual health is “a big picture of things”, and “everybody can be spiritually healthy”, whether they believe in religion or not. He explained, “Being spiritually healthy means [...] self-esteem issues, self-belief, [...] confidence in the way they live their lives. Not feeling conflicted. What is it that overlays the way I live my life?” Ivan then clarified that believers add a religious, philosophical perspective to the way they live their lives, while non-believers may not have a religious base but they have their own philosophy of life and can be spiritually healthy. He asserted that living a life addressing spiritual wellbeing “is just one of life’s decisions that could have an influence on your spiritual health.”

Alex explained that spiritual wellbeing is about people finding their purpose in life. He explained that people coming from traditional Christian religious beliefs would consider praying, reading the Bible, and their religious practices and rituals as being part of spiritual wellbeing. He further elaborated that individuals who are comfortable with their roles in society have spiritual wellbeing, while those who struggle to fit in, and have difficulties with their roles in society, suffer spiritually and have low spiritual wellbeing. For him, spiritual wellbeing is about all the things that create a sense of the individual and humanity within the community and enables people to cope with things that cannot be explained. It is more about having a heightened awareness of where one’s spirit is. To explain this, Alex shared an example of how he developed his awareness of spiritual wellbeing,

When I'm playing music well, [...] when every thing's working, there's this sense of a steady flow and it seems to be heightened awareness. There's a sense that what happens next is crucial, because you're at this point where everything's working and of course you want to maintain it. [...] That's where I apply myself and that's what I call spiritual wellbeing, when I'm at a point where I can realize my potential, as I perceive it.

One view of spiritual wellbeing seems to be about a lifestyle that can help improve an individual's spiritual health, whether one is religious or not. The other view seems to be associated with bringing about a heightened awareness of oneself, which enables people to achieve their potential and feel spiritually healthy and uplifted.

4.3.7 Childish or Child-like

While two participants discussed spirituality using a child-based metaphor, one had a positive stance, while the other had a negative view. Alex discussed spirituality positively as being childish and innocent.

Perhaps, as I was as a child; innocence, in the sense of not knowing, innocence in the sense of we're distracted by, I'm distracted by the thought of what are the consequences of my actions; and that means in a social sense, as well as the physical sense.

On a negative note, Carol was of the opinion that people in certain faiths, that have irrational practices and spiritualities, are infantile or childish. She was of the opinion that the believers of these faiths have an infantile grasp of reality that has

shaped their lives, and that may have led them to “treat non-believers narcissistically.” She elaborated,

I wouldn't trust that kind of infantile irrationality when, you know, you have got a knife or a sword or a hammer or something like that. Let me say, hey it is not true, your God doesn't want me dead and you said that this is the ethical thing to do. My God has told me that I have to do this, but I say that your God doesn't exist. Then there is a sure-fire way to get my head staked in, you know what I mean.

These are two opposing views of spirituality. While one participant looked at spirituality as innocence and child-like, the other saw it as childish and infantile. Both used the term “child” in their explanations but their meanings were completely different.

4.3.8 “Spirituality” a Word Inappropriate to use in Different Contexts

Carol was the only academic who was very critical of using the word spirituality in a wider context. She was of the opinion that spirituality has a specific use and should be used only in that way. She said it was useful for discussing “some kind of metaphysical in a life; that stands in relation to some kind of divine entity, whatever that entity may be.” She further added that people “tend to define their spirituality in terms of this kind of inner, this mystical metaphysical inner life, or fellow feeling or feeling of unity. A lot of them seem to refer to a feeling of unity with the world.” Carol felt that the word spirituality has a very important meaning within philosophy, but using it more generally and with a wide range of interpretations would make it meaningless.

Like other participants, she also discussed other concepts that could be associated with spirituality, but, like the others, was unable to provide a clear definition of the term.

4.4 Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE)

The data gathered from TSBE reveal that out of ten academics, five felt that spirituality has a wide range of definitions. They felt that spirituality is personal and can be understood differently by different people. They also felt that spirituality can be found in everything and everywhere. All academics stated that all four concepts of ethics, morals, values and spirituality are different but interconnected and often used them interchangeably. Three academics viewed spirituality as “a holistic way of life” and the “norm” for them.

All participants stated that many concepts like justice, human behaviour, and diversity are also associated with spirituality. Three academics also talked about cultural spirituality. Two academics were of the opinion that spirituality is a concept beyond reason or irrational and unexplainable. Three academics in TSBE also discussed organisational spirituality, and its influence on the workplace. Four academics had either not heard about spirituality or were unaware of it, especially as a separate term from religion. Table 4.2 summarises the data for TSBE.

Table 4.2

TSBE Academics' Viewpoints on Defining Spirituality

Subthemes	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
No clear definition of spirituality, being a broad construct	x	x	x		x		x			
Holistic way of life	x	x		x				x		
Ethics	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Values	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x
Morals	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Behaviour, justice and diversity	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cultural spirituality				x	x		x			
Beyond reason, irrational, unexplainable		x	x	x			x			
Workplace or Organisational spirituality				x	x			x		
Not heard about or unaware of spirituality	x			x		x			x	

Description of the Data

4.4.1 No Clear Definition of Spirituality; a Broad Construct

While some participants were unsure about the concept of spirituality, others attempted to define it. Quincy, Reese, Shelley, Uri, and William explained their viewpoints of how they understood spirituality. Shelley stated,

When I think of spirituality, the things I think about are those dimensions of knowledge and experiences in life that go beyond reason, towards more of a faith-based understanding of the world, of truth, of life and its meaning, to individuals and society.

Quincy discussed his own spirituality as being attuned to the environment, knowing his place, and respecting other peoples' place, and being responsible towards

the community. While Reese was a practising Christian, she was unclear about defining spirituality. She put it simply,

I just think that it is almost like, physical is my body, my motion is spirituality, [...] you define it as the gap of that kind of unknown thing out there that scientists will look at you and go you're nuts. I guess I use that word *faith* to come back to describe that you know it exists or that it's rational.

Uri's view of spirituality was, "The spirit is to me is the eternal being that transcends the emotions of the will, and so, spirituality, to me, is recognising the rule of the spirit above individual emotions." William's views on defining spirituality were a bit different. He was unable to define spirituality, but asserted that, "whether you are for or against religion or spirituality, you can't argue with the fact that we are here today because of thousands of years of spirituality." He elaborated,

Spirituality is all about the irrational. Not that irrationalising the way it's stupid, but irrational in that we are feeling and thinking things, for which we have no evidence, but nonetheless, we want to believe it. We still want it to make us feel a better person, through interaction with other people, commonalities at the human level.

Most of these participants were of the opinion that spirituality could be very personal depending on an individual's beliefs. They also felt that the wide range of understanding of the term renders it to be a challenge to define accurately, resulting in a wide range of definitions.

4.4.2 Holistic Way of Life

Quinn, Reese, Toby, and Xavier discussed spirituality as being a holistic way of life. Quinn stated that his spirituality was built through his life experiences. Similarly, Reese elaborated that spirituality was blended in her life holistically, and the way she carries herself inspires others to live a more spiritual life. Toby was of the opinion that while spirituality is an attractive concept, it is based on basic human needs. He explained that he was joyful and had no worries in life, and as such wasn't too clear about where his spirituality was at the time, but he believed that people with challenges and worries in life were generally more spiritual.

4.4.3 Ethics, Values, Morals and Spirituality

Nine out of ten participants in TSBE believed that all four concepts of spirituality, ethics, values, and morals are similar or overlapping, with subtle differences, and may be used interchangeably. All four concepts relate to the way people live their lives and perhaps that is why the terms are used interchangeably.

Shelley explained that while ethics, values, morals, and spirituality are similar in nature, there are numerous views about how they relate to each other. Her view of the connection between the four concepts is that "at the core, for ethics to survive, for morality to survive, it has to have some kind of spiritual or a theistic underpinning."

Toby, in contrast, was of the opinion that people are unable to distinguish between ethics, values, morals, and spirituality because of the people who call themselves spiritual, but behave unethically. He explained, "you can be a materialist and behave in an ethical way, which for all sense and purposes looks like spirituality but isn't. I think that people who are spiritual can be unethical." Uri stated the same and explained this with an example.

King David in the Bible was an immoral man, he committed adultery and murder, yet he had great promises from God. Saul committed very few, in fact, I don't think he committed adultery. He did try to kill David, but he did not kill anyone else, yet his kingship was taken, because he did something, which was considered the abomination. He took the role of a priest; David never took the role of a priest. So, we look at it in terms of morality and spirituality, David was more spiritual, but immoral.

According to Xavier, "spirituality is the overarching way of being that these things [four concepts] fall under, because unless one is engaged as a human being, one cannot be moral, one cannot see value, one cannot behave better." He believes that people who are "being genuine" are inherently spiritual beings, "because one is in touch with the 'L'âme Vitale' [the vital soul], one is in touch with what it is in essence to be". They can see the difference between right and wrong very clearly. Toby also said that spirituality can be a mix of ethics, values, and morals blended together.

Ethics. All ten participants in TSBE discussed the concept of ethics and what it means to them. They were of the opinion that ethics are about the way people "behave towards others," and is based on social and cultural norms and values. They asserted that it is about "doing the right thing," and provides a framework within which people are expected to function. Shelley explained,

Ethics is seeking to answer the question 'what is the right thing to do', or 'what is the best way to live a life?' Ethics can be spiritual, and ethics can be secular; ethics can be an attempt to do things based on our faith, and spirituality can be a way of underpinning ethics. [...] For

some people, and from my perspective, ethics is a system of norms, and morals are all about your individual relationship with those norms.

To explain this further, Val stated that being an ethical person requires one to be measured against certain standards within a society or the workplace. Yann and Zoey also had similar viewpoints; with the exception that Yann believed, “it’s personal views of ethics, which can be so different for everyone in different circumstances,” which she felt “can change from situation to situation.”

William asserted “no matter where you are in the world, if you take the ethics theory these principles are the same for everyone no matter where you are.” He added that ethics is about the human condition; and gave the example that “it is wrong for people to lie for personal gain”, no matter where they are. Uri, on the other hand, believed that “ethics has been on a sliding scale; it is not referred to something that has stood the test of time.” He felt that despite worldwide awareness on doing no harm, people still do.

Values. Val did not acknowledge any difference between morals and values, and so did not discuss values explicitly. The other eight participants had very similar opinions about values, as being personal and inherited from family or society. Some participants were of the opinion that values are hard to define, as they are based on the lived experiences of individuals, and can vary for different individuals.

According to Xavier, “values are that which we find worthy [...]. If it enriches people, *that’s* the true value. There’s the enrichment, so there is the connection between spirituality and value for me.” He further elaborated, “Spirituality is that appreciation of connectedness to people around you and also to the impact that we have on the world out there.” Reese added, “Values are the things that tend to drive you, or I tend to think that they drive you.”

William's opinion was that "values" is a grey area, and explained, "The issue with values is they are based on both moral and ethical reasoning. So, it becomes a grey area." He further elaborated, "A value has a subset of moral values plus ethical values. So, you add them together and that is someone's value set."

Shelley and Uri were of the opinion that cultural norms shape values, which can be justified by reasoning or asking the right questions. Shelley stated, "Reason is encumbered by values and by cultural norms, so what we have to look for is *the universal*, in terms of empirical universal, certain norms and rules and ideas that are cross culture." Uri elaborated, "Values becomes an easy way to understand everyone's positions without using a mandate of right or wrong. In understanding certain other cultures, [like] understanding filial piety, what are the values that affect family?"

Values, according to these academics, seem to be what people find has worth in people's lives, shapes culture, and can differ for different people, depending on their lived experiences.

Morals. While all ten participants discussed the concept of morals, they all seemed to be stating the same things as they did for ethics and values with only occasional minute differences. For some, defining morals was difficult and morals and values were used interchangeably. Shelley discussed this by saying, "moral values are values which you use as guides to your ethical behaviour and again, and all of these can be then informed by spiritual worldviews or not." She added,

Some people would say that you don't need God to drive morality, and that moral norms that exist in the society are historically and culturally constructed. People in a sense follow those norms and rules as part of almost a social contract.

Reese was of the opinion that morals are about what is right or wrong, and even if the law permits certain things, you do not do them because of moral reasoning. Yann elaborated that the way people are taught to behave develops their moral codes. Like ethics and values, morals can be different across different cultures. William explained,

Morals are culturally based, and they are different between different social contexts. Hence, people go overseas to experience their different dress, different food, different festivals, and those moral things are allowed to be different, because it doesn't affect the human condition. [...] So, morals refer to those things that can be different, and it is fun to have difference, 'cos that is what makes it all interesting.

Reflecting on his understanding of morals, Toby discussed a case where two Australian drug dealers were sentenced to death in Indonesia. He asserted that, within Australia, drug peddling is a serious offence, yet Australians wanted those criminals released; and he felt these two views were diametrically opposed morally. He explained, "We hold the moral high ground and I think most of our moral high grounds have holes in it. I think morality often is more easily swayed, or swayed by politicians" and "I think we're easily swayed as an organism."

Most academics discussed morals and values interchangeably and sometimes even as one phrase "moral values". More broadly, the data also reveal that ethics, morals, values, and spirituality were used interchangeably by the academics, as most were either unclear of their distinguishing characteristics or understood them with subtle differences.

4.4.4 Behaviour, Justice, and Diversity

In addition to the concepts discussed above, the participants from TSBE also discussed justice, behaviour, and diversity as concepts used in the context of spirituality. Discussing his own spirituality and behaviour, Uri stated, “it expresses itself and manifests itself in my behaviour, and in my actions, and in my thought, and my words, and my deeds,” and asserted that “one’s behaviour must reflect one’s spirit being and spirituality.” Val introduced the concepts of “analysis” and “independent investigation of the truth”. According to Val, “analysis” helps people internalize their thoughts, which help them “seek their own inner truths”. This enables them to not only listen to the outside world, but also be introspective, and listen to their inner voice. Val further added that spirituality is also associated with humour and humility as they help bring joy to others.

Another concept that emerged in one of the interviews was justice. Uri believed that justice is more important than the law of the land and is an important element of spirituality. He elaborated,

When the law is just, then there is convergence between law and justice. When the law is sensitive and caring, and provides for the disenfranchised, then the law is fine. But if the law disenfranchises more and more, then the law to me is unjust.

Some academics discussed diversity, stating that it supports spirituality. Reese was of the opinion that students come from a wide variety of backgrounds, religious or secular, from countries and cultures that are able to influence each other. She added that students connect with each other, especially through the internet, and adapt ideas

or concepts that suit them. According to Reese, “this diversity unifies people as it creates opportunities for them to share together, eat together, and worship together”.

The data reveal that spirituality can also encompass ideas and concepts like justice, humility, the search for truth through analysis, behaviour and diversity. The way people behave towards others may be construed as a reflection of their spirituality.

4.4.5 Cultural Spirituality

Toby, Uri, and William talked about cultural spirituality but only within the Aboriginal context. Toby asserted that the Aboriginal people have a higher level of spirituality than most people do as they are not focused on the material aspects of life. Uri explained the fact that, in the 1960s, the law of the land was to take Aboriginal children away from their parents, and have them adopted and raised in a “white” culture. These children had no connection with their cultural spirituality and were called the lost generation. William had heard some Aboriginal stories, but felt that he was unable to relate to their spirituality.

4.4.6 Beyond Reason, Irrational, and Unexplainable

Reese, Shelley, Toby, and William discussed spirituality as something that is beyond reason and can only be experienced in life on a day-to-day basis. William explained the meaning of spirituality being irrational as it is something that one can feel and think, but there is no concrete evidence of its existence, yet it exists.

-All four academics were of the opinion that spirituality is about something bigger than us, but lacking tangible evidence. They felt that it made people feel good about themselves by creating connections with people and a higher being or God, and

enables them to do things that may not be rational, such as caring for others unconditionally.

4.4.7 Workplace and Organisational Spirituality

Three participants—Toby, Uri, and Xavier—discussed organisational spirituality and how it could be used to manage or mismanage organisations. Toby felt that practising spirituality within organisations may have an underpinning of religion; where religion may be reinforced in the workplace. He added, “You want to use spirituality, but you want to use it with one foot in a searching for a religion camp; and that to me is dangerous.” He further argued that when people discuss spirituality, it turns “into a religious argument” and he was “weary” of the term. Xavier pointed out that organisational spirituality empowers managers to use people’s spirituality to “manipulate” them into doing what they want. He added, “That is exploiting the knowledge of spirituality to make as much money as you can for the organisation.”

On a different note, Uri was of the opinion that, “large corporations have got ethics standards but no one is complying with them,” and linked it to organisational spirituality stating, “it comes back to that element of spirituality to who and for what you are accountable, [...] because accountability is to [organisations] and not to the society at large.”

Toby asserted that organisational spirituality should address moral values, and the overall wellbeing of their employees including their spiritual wellbeing. He asserted that organisations should enable their employees to develop communication skills that could help them understand their needs and drives, and dealing with others.

4.4.8 Not Heard About or Unaware of Spirituality

Most academics in TSBE asked the researcher for the definition of spirituality used for this study. Four participants—Quincy, Toby, Val, and Yann—had either not heard of spirituality or were unable to identify with the concept at the beginning of the interview. However, as the interview continued, all four explored their own understanding and discussed the concept of spirituality. Val reflected on other people's spirituality,

They believe in what they do, and perhaps that may be this belief system is part of spirituality, but you have set of belief systems, and I'm not talking about God sense or that type of thing; more in, how you want your family to run, how'd you want them to integrate with one another, how'd you want them to integrate into the community?

This led her to say, "Maybe I'm more spiritual than I realised. I don't know. I never thought of myself as being a spiritual person." Similarly, all four academics felt that they were unaware of the fact that they were spiritual, and expressed that they had gained some clarity on the concept.

4.5 Comparing FoE and TSBE

The cumulative comparative data gathered from the participating academics in FoE and TSBE is presented in Table 4.3 below. Most academics in FoE believed that there is no cohesive definition of spirituality, that it is a broad construct, and can be personal; in TSBE, only half of the academics had the same opinion. While all participants in FoE were aware of spirituality, only six participants in TSBE knew about it, with four others being unsure or unaware of what they knew at the beginning of the interview. All participants in TSBE believed that concepts like justice,

behaviour, and diversity are associated with spirituality in some ways, while only three in FoE discussed these concepts as being associated with spirituality. One academic from FoE asserted that spirituality should not be associated with any other concept or used within any other context, except religion. More people in TSBE than FoE believed spirituality to be a holistic way of life, which is beyond reason, irrational, and unexplainable. While one participant in FoE thought spirituality as infantile, and another as innocent, no one in TSBE held either of these opinions.

Table 4.3

FoE and TSBE Academics' Viewpoints on Defining Spirituality

Subthemes	FoE	TSBE	Total
No cohesive definition of spirituality, being a broad construct	6	5	11
Holistic way of life	3	4	7
Ethics	9	10	19
Values	6	8	14
Morals	3	10	11
Behaviour, justice and diversity	3	10	13
Cultural spirituality	4	3	7
Spiritual wellbeing	3	0	3
Child-like or childish	2	0	2
Spirituality a word inappropriate to use in different contexts	1	0	1
Beyond reason, irrational, and unexplainable	0	4	5
Workplace or organisational spirituality	0	3	3
Not heard about or unaware of spirituality	0	4	4

4.6 Discussion on Defining Spirituality

The participating academics from FoE and TSBE found it challenging to define spirituality. Most were of the opinion that spirituality is a broad construct, and somewhat personal, which makes it difficult to define. Nonetheless, all academics

shared their ideas and experiences relating to spirituality, illustrating their interpretations of the term. Some of the concepts discussed by the academics in FoE were ethics, morals, values, altruism, holistic lifestyle, cultural spirituality, spiritual wellbeing, and childish or child-like, while those from TSBE discussed additional concepts like irrationality, awareness, life and its meaning, respecting others, and responsibility towards the community. Some also stated that spirituality is personal and can be found everywhere.

These diverse viewpoints present a challenge to identifying a common understanding that could lead to an academic definition of spirituality. This is in consensus with literature which states that spirituality is a term used in many different contexts with people associating it with everything from golf to religion, and continuing to argue about how to define it (Feldmeier, 2016). This could be because the meaning of the word “spiritual” for people depends on their contextual understanding of its usage (McLean, 1994). Nonetheless, the greater challenge has been to define the term outside theological contexts (Natsis, 2016). Rowson (2014, p.14) is of the opinion that “some words are easy to define and operationalise, some are hard to define and operationalise, and some should not be defined or operationalised at all.” Despite the varied viewpoints, literature discusses some common underpinnings that are present in the attempts that have been made to define spirituality.

Miller and Drake (1997) assert that spirituality is a broad vision of life, and everything can be seen holistically with reverence for every aspect of creation. It directs the way people want to live their lives, in accordance with their values and meanings (Sheldrake, 2007), and is about interconnectedness and having faith and optimism. Manz et al. (2006) explain that spirituality enables people to do good, and

serve humanity to the best of their abilities. It also guides people's lives by trusting that "no matter how bad things get, they will always work out somehow" (Manz et al., 2006, p.108). The opinions of the academics from FoE and TSBE seem to reflect the literature.

Almost all participants in FoE and all participants in TSBE discussed ethics, morals, values, and spirituality, regarding them as similar, and sometimes using the terms interchangeably. According to Fry (2005) and Alexander (2006), ethics is about people living a "good life" (Fry, 2005, p. 329) with values and morals, that evoke certain behaviours within society. Values enable people to select their "attitudes and behaviours" (Rohan, 2000, p. 258) and provides them with meaning and purpose in life (Zhang et al., 2014). The literature also suggest, however, that ethics, values, morals, and spirituality are interlinked and could be used interchangeably (McLaughlin, 2005) despite the subtle differences among them. All four concepts relate to the way life is lived, addressing certain aspects of individual philosophies of life. While each concept seems to have a distinct identity, their nature seems to overlap, being associated with living a purposeful, meaningful life, meaningfully. This may be why academics perceived ethics, values, morals, and spirituality to be interconnected and interchangeable.

Nevertheless, all participants of this study stated that while all four concepts were similar, each concept also has its own identity and the differences between the four concepts lie within the contexts they are used. One academic in FoE explained ethics and morals as a "code of conduct", which requires people to treat each other with respect, be beneficial to each other, and do the least harm. Most academics viewed "ethics" as a measure against certain societal standards, and many were unable to distinguish between "morals" and "values".

Some participants from FoE and TSBE viewed spirituality as a holistic way of life or a norm for them. According to Tisdell (2003), spirituality creates an awareness towards developing a holistic individual by connecting with “the higher self” (p. 29), as “spirituality is an internal way of knowing and a holistic way of being” (Allison & Broadus, 2009, p. 77). A holistic way of life includes people’s faith, spirit, health, work, and other practices integrated as a whole (Benefiel et al., 2014). Ridge (2015, p. 213) further explains that contemporary “spirituality is holistic and primarily concerned with the sacred—a quest for meaning, development of the spirit, and ultimate values.” These academics also felt that while spirituality exists, it is generally not measurable, and can create confusion amongst rational people. Illes (2015) is of the opinion that most things in life that people value and find meaningful, such as “love, friendship, and support” (p. 188), cannot be measured, and spirituality is amongst them.

Three academics from FoE and all from TSBE viewed behaviour, justice, and diversity as part of spirituality and felt that people’s behaviours towards others demonstrate their spirituality, although the literature does not generally make those connections. These attributes can be observed when people demonstrate spiritual values, which are developed over time, like integrity, care, justice, and prudence in their behaviour towards others (Fry, 2005; Pawar, 2014).

Reflecting on spirituality led academics to address different types of spirituality. Four academics in FoE and three in TSBE discussed cultural spirituality. Although academics in FoE mentioned Aboriginal and Chinese spirituality and cultural Christians, TSBE’s academics only talked about Aboriginal spirituality briefly. These spiritualities were not identified during the initial literature review but further research highlights some of their features. Grieves (2009), Muir (2011), and

Poroch (2012) explain that there is great reverence for the earth and land in Aboriginal spirituality, and “a kinship with the environment” (Grieves, 2009, p. 7); a characteristic acknowledged by the academics who discussed it. Grieves (2009) elaborates that Aboriginal spirituality forms the basis of the cultural values, norms, and lifestyles of the various Aboriginal groups across Australia, often through storytelling (Poroch, 2012). The academics in both faculties also discussed storytelling as part of Aboriginal spirituality.

One academic stated that culture is about respecting humanity and all its elements, yet she was very negative about Aboriginal spirituality, calling it infantile. She challenged the stories and myths that define Aboriginal spirituality and called them primitive. Grieves (2009) clarifies,

Aboriginal spirituality derives from a philosophy that establishes the holistic notion of the interconnectedness of the elements of the earth and the universe, animate and inanimate, whereby people, the plants and animals, landforms and celestial bodies are interrelated. These relations and the knowledge of how they are interconnected are expressed, and why it is important to keep all things in a healthy interdependence is encoded, in sacred stories or myths. (p. 7)

This statement demonstrates that Aboriginal spirituality is holistic in nature, and the stories and myths help people develop interconnectedness and dependencies with all the elements of life. Aboriginal spirituality focuses on the material and spiritual aspects of life. Kees (2010) states that developing an understanding of Aboriginal stories could help people develop their spirituality and connect with their inner selves and with others. If taken beyond the superficiality of story, to the realm

of interconnectedness, Aboriginal spirituality may be better understood and not be infantile as suggested by the academic.

Two academics in FoE talked about Chinese spirituality and while one was critical of it, the other looked at its positive elements, in terms of family life and its importance. Jong (2013) explains that Confucianism influences Chinese culture, and people are expected to take care and responsibility for each other, especially their own families. Their spirituality includes a belief in the Buddhist notion of karma, and a focus on altruism for a better life, and as an obligation, which was identified by one of the participants. The concept of cultural Christians, in contrast, appears to have no academic literature associated with it.

Two participants in FoE addressed the concept of spiritual wellbeing and one used the term interchangeably with spirituality. Fisher (2009b) asserts that spiritual wellbeing is defined by many authors according to the way they view the world. It could be an affirmation of relationship with God, self, and everything connected with wholeness, reflected in an individual's way of being. The participants' discussions of spiritual wellbeing were similar, acknowledging it could be religious or secular, and dependent on their own perceptions of life experiences.

While talking about spiritual wellbeing, one participant from FoE also talked about the way music evoked his spiritual wellbeing and enabled him to realise his full potential. This was another aspect that was not considered during the initial review of the literature, and only emerged during the interview process. Hendricks (2011) explains that music evokes the capacity in individuals to transform themselves by connecting with themselves and their spirituality. Carey (cited in Hendricks, 2011, p. 143) explains, "[Music] has the capacity to break through the layers of insulation from our environment to reach the 'soul' to evoke a transformation in our relationship

to ourselves, others, and connection to the spiritual.” Music also enables people to renew themselves and improves their spiritual wellbeing (Palmer, 2003).

While two participants compared spirituality to a child, they had completely opposing viewpoints: infantile and childish versus child-like or innocent. A study of literature was unable to identify any academic literature discussing the two notions of spirituality as childish or child-like. However, Mueller (2010) explains that “children are spiritual beings, but their expression of spirituality may be limited by adults’ ability to understand them” (p. 197). Nguyen (2016) adds that spirituality now requires a revival of innocence with some added sophistication into understanding the “human experience” of perceived spirituality and the naivety of being hopeful to inspire people to discover “spiritual truths” (p.21). Perhaps, spirituality is about innocence and child-like behaviour which is pure and simple, yet sophisticated enough to hold people’s attention, to the unknown, or what cannot be rationalised.

One participant from FoE was of the opinion that the word spirituality should only be used in the religious contexts. Melloni (2016), in contrast, states that there is a need for rational, secular, and religious people to use the word spirituality, on a wider scale, instead of associating it with religion, as it is a more inclusive terminology and appeals to all.

Some participants from TSBE suggested that spirituality is beyond reason, irrational, and unexplainable, but that it exists, although without evidence. According to Laurence (1999), spirituality is subjective in nature and is irrational. Spirituality is “the intuitive, non-rational meditative side” (p. 4) of individuals that seeks to build connections with themselves and the world, while developing a “sense of wholeness” (p. 4). Neal (2013) explains that there are people who may think of spirituality as “superstition or irrational” (p.12), and its association with religion often creates

concern amongst individuals about religious discrimination or legal issues that may arise because of this within the workplace.

Perhaps, spirituality is irrational due to its subjective and intangible nature, but is also rational as its existence can be felt in the way people connect with animate and inanimate objects. Korac-Kakabadse et al. (2002, p. 166) assert that “spirituality and consciousness are not irrational, ‘far out’ beliefs but, rather, the core of dynamic evolutionary systems,” and are beneficial if used in the “analysis and practice of organizational design, change and management” towards the development of organisational spirituality.

Organisational spirituality was mentioned by three academics in TSBE, presumably influenced by their interest in business and management. These participants talked about the way spirituality could be beneficial or misused within organisations. They felt that organisational spirituality may be used to proselytise religious beliefs, which wearied them. They related these to their own experiences as academics within an organisation, the university. A study by Bell-Ellis et al. (2015) on workplace spirituality reveals that academics within secular universities were not comfortable discussing spirituality within their workplaces, while academics in religious universities felt that their organisations were spiritual and spirituality was encouraged. These findings seem to be similar to some of the academics at the University of Tasmania, which is secular in nature, and the academics’ viewpoints regarding workplace and organisational spirituality may be reflective of the secular Australian culture in general.

One academic also felt that organisational spirituality empowers managers to manipulate employees, which could create a number of issues including isolation and stress. In contrast, Yaghoubi and Motahhari (2016) view organisational spirituality as

a solution for issues arising within the workplace, like stress or estrangement amongst employees. They assert that spirituality can bring peace, joy, and happiness, and create a meaningful workplace environment where employees are more committed to their work and the organisation.

As mentioned, some academics began the interviews professing limited knowledge of spirituality but as they explored their own understanding during the interview process were able to talk about it very easily, with some participants continuing their discussions after the interviews were over. According to Thompson (2011, p.164), spirituality is “transformational, moral and ethical” and can be discussed in terms of “integrity, honesty, goodness, knowing, wholeness, congruency, interconnectedness, teamwork, cultural customs, beliefs, values and faith.” He further added that spirituality can be “expressed through prayer, meditation, worship and religious ritual” (p. 164). This reflects the data obtained from the academics participating in this study, and validates the challenge of defining spirituality. The data reveal that most participants believe that there is no cohesive definition of spirituality, and see it as a broad construct that may mean different things to different people, making it challenging to define.

4.7 Theme 2: Spirituality and Religion

The second theme that emerged from the data was spirituality and its association with religion. Tables 4.4 and 4.5 list subthemes arising from each faculty and Table 4.6 shows the cumulative data from FoE and TSBE together. All nineteen participants, whether religious or not, were of the view that the word spirituality is linked to religion in one way or another. However, the opinions expressed about how it relates to religion varied greatly.

4.8 Faculty of Education (FoE)

All participants in FoE were of the opinion that spirituality has some association with religion. Seven participants believed in a God, or deity, or the metaphysical, irrespective of their association with any particular religion. Four participants associated spirituality with prayer and meditation, and discussed their importance in people's lives. All participants in FoE discussed connection, altruism, and service as being associated with religion and connected with spirituality in a general sense. Table 4.4 lists the key subthemes associated with spirituality and religion.

Table 4.4

FoE Academics' Viewpoints on Spirituality and Religion

Subthemes	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Religion	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
God or the metaphysical	x	x	x			x	x	x	x
Prayer and meditation	x	x			x		x		
Connections, altruism and service	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Description of the Data

4.8.1 Religion

Alex, coming from a Christian background, associated spirituality with religion. His understanding of religion had changed over time: "I've come to a point where I separate church and the notion of God." He added that his "interest in science and technology, and things that are tangible", has led him to "disregard the Bible descriptions of God or church, beliefs in things, superstition" and he feels that he still needs answers.

Bailey viewed spirituality as being part of an individual's identity and connection with God, people, and the world created by Him. Carol and Danny believed that the concept of spirituality has emerged from religion and religious philosophy, and should not be dissociated from its origins. While Danny was an atheist, he practiced morals and values similar to those in Christianity. He added, "Religion is an aspect [of spirituality] and therefore spirituality can be encompassing of many other different things." He felt that people choose a religion that suits them, but disagreed with the morals and values of the Muslim culture, which he asserted were governed by their religious and spiritual beliefs.

Carol was also an atheist and believed that the notion of spirituality undermines people's humanity and capacity to act ethically. She discussed the non-religious ideas of being part of the universe, and the awe and wonder towards it as a concept associated with spirituality, but she did not want to call these ideas spirituality.

Grace also associated spirituality with organised religion, as she came from a strong religious background. As a youth, she attended church and practised its religious traditions, but, as she grew older, she moved away from organised religion. Having worked with Quakers for some time, she described them saying, "they're sort of a squeegee type of Christianity where, you know; there are no ceremonies. You just basically sit in silence. It's actually quite Zen."

Hayden viewed spirituality as much more open than religion. He explained,

Spirituality is clearly part of religion, and to me seems to be related to it. Many of the organized churches seem to argue that the only way to find the true path is through a thing called the church that is formalized, there is a structure, there are priests or there are people who act in that

intermediate role. Spirituality seems to me to be much more kind of open. It's about people thinking that they can communicate directly with their God or whatever it is that they see that as the bigger thing of themselves.

Ellen was of the opinion that, as spirituality is a broad construct, one could be religious and spiritual, or be spiritual but not religious. She believed that spirituality is a holistic way of life and is associated with people's belief systems, whether they are religious or not. This idea was also held by Fran whose parents were religious and associated spirituality with their tradition. Although Fran was raised religious, she was not currently affiliated with any religion and she said that her quest for spirituality was still ongoing.

4.8.2 God or the Metaphysical

For Alex and Bailey traditional Christian spirituality has to do with God and religion, and the beliefs and practices associated with it. Alex also discussed the metaphysical aspect of life and shared one of his childhood experiences.

When I was young, maybe seven or eight, we were on our family picnic and my dad had a little boat. We lived in the north of Sydney with this lovely river system nearby, so we would go on the boat. We'd gone to a beach, where there was an old wooden jetty, and we were sitting at the end of the jetty, fishing. What I remember is having lost my balance, fall into the water, looking at myself, when I was under the water, seeing myself under the water was an out of body experience. I've got a scientific explanation for this but I think then that realisation that there is something out there, really struck me.

While discussing the notion of God, Bailey advocated that God created everything, and the whole universe reflects something about who God is. He explained that God is who we make Him to be, as there is no set identity of God, everyone has a different way of experiencing Him and, thus, spirituality. Bailey believed that all people are spiritual beings and created in the image of God, and many are trying to connect with the transcendent or something outside themselves. He asserted that the best way to live life is to know God, the real purpose of existence, and one's self. Being a devoted Christian, Bailey said he ensures that whatever is preached is practiced at home with consistency.

Carol asserted that God or the metaphysical do not exist, and was very critical of people subscribing to them. She argued, "This life is so precious, not because there is some kind of metaphysical reality out there, but because of what it is now." She blamed the non-existence of God for people's negative behaviour towards others. Explaining her understanding of the Bible, she stated that none of the stories in it are real, but are metaphorical. She was of the opinion that the Bible is the greatest book ever written, with great sets of parables and allegorical stories, but does not believe it to be from God.

While Danny did not believe in God nor practise any religion, he was of the opinion that religion is about "believing in God," and that it provides a code of conduct on how to live life, "having very set morals and values that may be good or bad for some."

Fran's quest to find spirituality led her to the Quakers, who believe that God is within people, and do not have ministers who tell you what to do. She explained that their meetings are conducted in stillness, and one can only speak if the spirit or "otherly," something that is more than human, moves them. While Fran went to the

Anglican Church as she grew up, she was unmoved by the practices of her faith, and the notion of “otherly” was more appealing to her. She believed spirituality is all about love, and something otherworldly or metaphysical that influences this world.

4.8.3 Prayer and Meditation

Alex, Bailey, Ellen, and Grace associated spirituality with prayer and meditation. Alex talked about prayer and meditation as practices within the Christian religious context, where people read the Bible and pray to God. He also talked about the meditation practices of Chakra which can be used for healing. Bailey talked about how prayer and meditation could differ within different contexts.

I pray and [...] meditate [...] in ways that are very different to someone who had a different set of beliefs about who God was, who God wasn't. I acknowledge that people are spiritual and they'll have different ways of experiencing that.

Ellen and Grace believed prayer and meditation were private practices that could help people connect with themselves inwardly during reflection.

4.8.4 Connections, Altruism and Service

While most participants discussed connection as part of spirituality in various contexts—such as with themselves, others, and the universe—others discussed it very specifically, relating it directly to spirituality. Bailey explained how God and religion influenced the interconnectedness of humanity by saying,

The whole idea that we get from things like the human rights about the brotherhood of humanity, is based in the idea that we are connected because of that same belief we've come from God. All of us have just evolved in different ways so we are connected in that sense.

Danny believed that everything is connected with the universe and is related to spirituality, while Carol was of the opinion that connections with people refer to having deep, meaningful conversations with others that could benefit humanity. Grace discussed spirituality in terms of altruism and service, and praised the Dalai Lama, a religious leader, who thinks of others above himself. She also marvelled at people like Tim Costello and the doctors in *Médecins Sans Frontières* who step out of themselves to serve others, and she saw this as more than just ethics or morals. She added, “There is another dimension in that it is sublimating *the self* to the needs of others.” She was also concerned that insufficient service and altruism is found in society today.

The data firmly establishes that the academics see a connection between religion and spirituality. While some participants were opposed to the notion of God or the metaphysical, most agreed that that religion and spirituality have a connection with God. Some also discussed prayer and meditation as something that may help people connect inwardly to themselves, and outwardly to others.

4.9 Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE)

All participants in TSBE associated spirituality with religion, even though some participants were non-religious and thought that they unaware of spirituality. Seven participants believed in God or a metaphysical higher being and three people talked about prayer. Eight people discussed the Golden Rule from the Bible, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”. Five academics discussed connection, altruism, and service to others as being associated with religion and spirituality. Table 4.5 lists these subthemes.

Table 4.5

TSBE Academics' Viewpoints on Spirituality and Religion

Subthemes	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Religion	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
God or the metaphysical	x	x	x		x		x	x		x
Prayer	x	x	x							
The Golden Rule	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x
Connections, altruism and service			x	x	x	x	x			

Description of Data

4.9.1 Religion

While four participants in TSBE were atheists and two were non-religious, all were of the opinion that spirituality is associated with religion. Academics with a religious background stated that their spirituality relied on their Christian religious beliefs, which they practiced on a daily basis. Reese was raised around people of different religions, where spirituality was considered a norm of life that had influenced her upbringing. She explained, “As a Christian, I think it is all pretty streamlined for us. There’s a certain way we are supposed to live our lives.” Clarifying her understanding of her religious spirituality, she added,

The way I interpret Christianity may not necessarily be the same for other people who are spiritual; [...] because it is either someone’s taken bits and pieces of religion that suits them or fits them, or have chosen to practise in a way that is a kind of not as orthodox strict.

While practising Christianity, Reese also studied world religions and their teachings to develop her own spirituality, which she said helped her get through hard times, and kept her grounded. Shelly believed that spirituality is faith based, and

brings an understanding of life and everything associated with it. She said that spirituality and religion are about having faith in not knowing and making a leap.

Academics who were agnostic or atheist argued that, as spirituality is associated with religion, the terms are used interchangeably. As soon as the word spirituality is used in any context, religion pops up in their mind. While some of them did not believe in organised religion or spirituality, they respected people who do. Yann explained, “I have learnt that there is a very important role for structured, developed spirituality in the form of religion in the world for many people. So I have huge respect for that.”

In contrast to Yann, Toby and Val were of the opinion that religion misuses spirituality. Val’s viewpoint was that when people talk about spirituality she assumed that they were talking about religion and would tell them that she did not know anything about it. She explained, “I’m really anti-religion because I see the damage that it does to people, the world actually, and so I approach it [spirituality] from there.”

William and Yann were of the opinion that religion turns spirituality into dogmatic rules that are used to indoctrinate people. This was acknowledged by Uri, a devout Christian, who asserted that people’s behaviour towards others reflects their spirituality. He gave the example of religious wars that do not support the core teachings of some faiths, yet people professing those faiths act against the tenets of their faith. He felt that such situations do not reflect spirituality in any way.

4.9.2 God or the Metaphysical

Some participants from TSBE discussed the concept of God or a metaphysical higher being. Although Quincy was an atheist, he believed that religious people

believe in God or a “higher being that listens to them and provides direction and guidance to them. [...] essentially there’s someone there to help them through those times of difficulty.” Shelley defended the notion of God by saying,

If reason [...] or empiricism had solved all the problems, there would be no need for God, but they don’t and, [...] as a consequence it leads you to try and think about, well, what I am going to put my faith in, in this context.

William explained his understanding of spirituality and God or the metaphysical, as follows: “I think spirituality is if you believe you belong or you are contributing to something bigger than yourself like Gaia, for example, mother earth, or God or the eco-system or whatever it is.”

4.9.3 Prayer and Meditation

While Quincy professed to be an atheist, he talked about meditation, which he uses to connect to his higher self, rather than God, using the same process as religious meditation. Within their religious contexts, Reese and Shelley explained that people have a strong sense of God’s presence in their lives and they believe that God listens to them and helps them in times of need, through prayers. Reese believed that God is perfection and one must strive to achieve perfection by praying to Him and meditating. She explained,

I think it is a very personal thing and so my faith will be very different from your faith regardless of what God we pray to. So, as a result of that, I’d like to think that mine is centred in the fact that I am not perfect, that I need assistance, I’m a bit flawed. So therefore, I have

been set an example of what perfection looks like and although I strive for that, I'll never achieve that.

4.9.4 Connections, Altruism, and Service

Academics in TSBE also talked about connection, altruism, and service associated with spirituality. Most participants felt connected to other people and appreciated humanity by engaging with others, and practising duty of care. Some participants also discussed spirituality as “being in the right place” and “connecting with the universe,” something much bigger than them and their will. Toby felt that he was “made of stars” and would be recycled back to them. He clarified, “So I would probably think of myself as a spiritual person, but not in the sense that most arguments would go.”

Uri believed that spirituality and religion are also associated with altruism. He discussed the fact that there are people who go to war-stricken areas where they establish clinics and refugee camps, and may have to sacrifice their lives for others. These people do this irrespective of the law or dangers associated with those places and this altruism is because of their spirituality.

4.9.5 The Golden Rule

One of the concepts that emerged from the interviews was the “Golden Rule”, arising from the Biblical “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (Luke 6:31). Both religious and secular participants discussed the Golden Rule as being a worldview acceptable to all.

Xavier explained that love is the reason we support each other and is spiritual in nature, but the trouble with the word in English is that it is used to express a variety of relationships or interactions. Being a Christian, he felt that love is the foundation of

his faith and is used in the context of “love thy neighbour as thyself”; but within general contexts, the word love is difficult to use with spirituality because it is sometimes used in sexualised terms. Uri explained that the Golden Rule is about love or “agape”, which means one is “willing to lay down one’s life for others.”

4.10 Comparing FoE and TSBE

As seen in Table 4.6, all 19 academics participating in this study from FoE and TSBE associated spirituality with religion in one way or another, and stated that, whenever they think of spirituality, religion comes to mind instantly. Most academics in both faculties also discussed God or a higher being associated with religion and spirituality, even though some did not believe in the existence of God. Some academics in FoE and TSBE also talked about prayer and meditation within religious contexts, and one from TSBE spoke about outside contexts. Eight academics from TSBE discussed the Golden Rule “Do unto others as you would they do unto you”, which none of the academics from FoE touched upon, while all nine participants from FoE discussed connection, altruism and service, compared to only five academics from TSBE.

Table 4.6

FoE and TSBE Academics’ Viewpoints on Spirituality and Religion

Subthemes	FoE	TSBE	TOTAL
Religion	9	10	19
God or the metaphysical	7	7	14
Prayer and meditation	4	3	4
Connections, altruism and service	9	5	14
The Golden Rule	0	8	8

4.11 Discussion on Spirituality and Religion

All participants, irrespective of their association with any belief system, were of the opinion that spirituality was linked to religion in some way. The first thought that came to mind when thinking about spirituality was religion. Spirituality has its roots in religion, and is closely related to it, and as such spirituality and religion have been used interchangeably over the years (Allison & Broadus, 2009; Borges, et al., 2015; Cafferky, 2012). Zinnbauer et al. (1997) explain that, historically, spirituality has been associated with religion but then assert that they are distinct in nature. This distinction was also viewed by the academics, who perceived religion to be organised and structured, and a means to develop one's spirituality, while spirituality was about something greater than oneself and not bound by religion.

Religion has been defined by authors as an organised, formal, communal spirituality, with a common set of beliefs, practices (Cafferky, 2012), values, doctrines, and principles, and a relationship with God or transcendence that fosters certain ethical and moral behaviours (King, 2007; Ondeck, 2002). Religion can be observed through people's experiences in the form of the rites, rituals, and symbolisms that they practice to reflect their spiritual beliefs (Allison & Broadus, 2009; Cafferky, 2012). To put it simply, Borges et al. (2015, p. 525) explain "religions are institutions organized around the idea of spirit and refer to the belief systems and services that people inherit or adopt, and which they understand to be meant to lead to happiness and satisfaction".

Most participants in FoE and TSBE who associated spirituality with religion also discussed the relationship between spirituality and God or the metaphysical. While some participants were agnostic or atheist, they had adopted Christian values

and morals in their lifestyles, and respected those who believed in religion. According to Mulder (2014), spirituality is broader than religion and includes all concepts associated with religion, including meaning, purpose, hope, and relationships.

The religious participants in both faculties had strong Christian beliefs with a faith in God who listens to them and helps them in need. Christian spirituality focuses on loving others, which is like loving God (Faesen, 2016), connecting and engaging with the transcendent God, and living a virtuous life with a sense of transcendence (Feldmeier, 2016; Perrin, 2007). Avakian (2015) explains that Christian spirituality requires believers to align their will with the will of God through sacrifice, humility, and suffering. This is very similar to many other religions, such as the Baha'i Faith. Abdu'l-Bahá states, "Spirituality is the greatest of God's gifts" (p. 94), and is a means to turn to God, and it grants everlasting life. Religion enables people to develop their spirituality through engagement with the transcendent or God, and is a lifelong process (McLean, 1994). According to Mulder (2014), religious practices include spiritual development within groups or individually, through prayer, study of texts and worship. Rituals and prayer are directly linked to religion, but the search for God or metaphysical, inner qualities, and the development of spiritual values, may or may not be associated with religion (Fry, 2005). Within the context of religion, it can be asserted that God is at the centre, and rituals, practices, sacrifice, and humility, help develop peoples' spirituality by having faith in Him.

Some participants in FoE and TSBE discussed prayer and meditation as part of spirituality. Religious participants stated that they prayed and meditated as part of their religious practices, while others meditated for different reasons. Meraviglia (1999) defines prayer as "An activity of the human spirit reflecting connectedness with God—a defining attribute of spirituality" (p. 26). Prayer can be "verbal" or

“contemplative” (p. 26); it has the ability to influence an individual’s spirituality (Meraviglia, 1999) and is part of religious practices and help develop spiritual awareness within people (Huber & MacDonald, 2012).

All participants in FoE and five in TSBE talked about connection, altruism, and service as part of spirituality and religion. One academic from FoE explained that some people sacrifice their own needs to help others, and have intrinsic motivation; they are altruistic, which is “another dimension” of life. She compared these people to holy and spiritual people who influence the world significantly. Benefiel et al. (2014) suggest that activities undertaken within religious community life enable people to become more aware of themselves, connect with others, and develop altruistic behaviours towards others. Some of these activities include prayer, meditation, celebrations, holy days, and service to others, which also helps them give meaning and purpose to life (McLean, 1994; Meraviglia, 1999).

The Golden Rule, that is “Do unto others as they would have them do unto you,” was a concept that most participants from TSBE talked about, stating that it was taken up from religion. According to Fry (2005), the Golden Rule is common to all major religions of the world, and is evidence in the fact that “all religions espouse the values of humility, charity, veracity, and vision” (Smith, 1992 cited in Fry, 2005, p. 12). This rule is about connecting with others, with a duty of care and responsibility towards them irrespective of who they are (Thompson, 2011). The Golden Rule is an outward expression of spirituality and has been carried forward from religion for people in general, as a formula to live by.

The data reveal that while spirituality and religion are not identical, they are interconnected, with spirituality a concept that emerged from religion. The difference lies in that spirituality is the search for meaning, and goes beyond the material aspects

of life, while religion develops the spiritual essence of people through practices and rituals (Zsolnai, 2004). Religion focuses on structure and is associated with God, a higher being, or the metaphysical. Religious rituals like prayer and meditation help develop people's spirituality, which allows them to build connections and altruistic behaviours that serve humanity.

4.12 Theme 3: Secular Spirituality

As discussed in previous sections, all academics in FoE and TSBE associated spirituality with religion. Interestingly, however, some of these academics added that spirituality can also be dissociated from religion and considered secular, as it incorporates wider worldviews that may not be ascribed to any religion. Table 4.7 and 4.8 list the concepts academics in FoE and TSBE respectively view as associated with secular spirituality, while Table 4.9 provides the cumulative data for both faculties.

4.13 Faculty of Education (FoE)

As shown in Table 4.7 six FoE participants viewed spirituality as having non-religious aspects associated with secular worldviews. Four participants explained that spirituality was about the wonderment and awe of the universe, its immensity, and one's place in that universe, which is not associated with any religious doctrine. Two participants stated that they considered themselves as not spiritual or religious but good people. Five participants linked secular spirituality to nature and the Japanese concept of "Zen", of being one with nature and one's true self. Three participants connected their spirituality to music and the arts, explaining that these take people into heightened consciousness, where time and space are irrelevant. Two participants

were of the opinion that secular spirituality corresponds to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, which explains spirituality as a need beyond self-actualisation.

Table 4.7

FoE Academics' viewpoints of concepts associated with secular spirituality

Subthemes	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Non-religious and worldviews			x	x	x	x		x	x
Wonderment and awe			x	x			x	x	
Not spiritual or religious but good person			x			x			
Spiritual but not religious				x			x	x	
Nature and Zen	x				x	x	x	x	
Music and the arts	x				x			x	
Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs	x						x		

Description of the Data

4.13.1 Non-Religious and Worldviews

While all participants agreed that spirituality is associated in some way with religion, six academics in FoE also discussed spirituality as being secular. Ivan elaborated that because of the subjective nature of spirituality, there is no right or wrong way to approach the concept and that many viewpoints are possible. Hayden believed that humanists have similar types of relationships with others, and different cultures, as religious people do, even though they do not believe in religion themselves, and consider themselves spiritual.

4.13.2 Wonderment and Awe

Hayden, Grace, and Carol discussed spirituality as being associated with the feelings of wonder and awe in nature. Hayden explained that people are able to find spiritual nourishment from nature through activities like looking at nature or walking

in the country. Similarly, Grace expressed that when she sits on a hill or looks at the night sky, she realises the number of galaxies out there and this creates a sense of awe and wonder within her. Carol talked about the theological philosopher, Fries, who responded to God with awe and wonderment. She feels awe and wonderment towards the universe but believes that appreciating life, and all that it offers, does not need an idea of God. Carol emphasised, “We should be like Fries except not about God; we should be like, *Ahh!*”

4.13.3 Not Spiritual or Religious but Good Person

Fran considered spirituality to be very different from religion, but was unsure about that difference. She stated that she was “a good principled person,” and added that to her that was “very separate from my spirituality.” Grace felt that people who associate spirituality with religion close themselves to possibilities outside religion, and that is why others avoid any association with it. She believed that effective spirituality is all about having pure thoughts and leaving oneself wide open to embrace the whole, rather than having a narrow viewpoint of things. She added that the “projection of good is actually better for the balance of the whole cosmos in that sense,” and was thus not religious or spiritual per se.

4.13.4 Spiritual but Not Religious

Danny, Grace, and Hayden discussed the idea of being spiritual but not religious, stating that personal spirituality is where one moves beyond rituals and rites to a higher plane that exists beyond human realities. Hayden found it challenging to discuss spirituality purely within religious contexts as he believed that there are people who consider themselves spiritual but not religious. He explained that being “spiritual but not religious” is about getting spiritual nourishment from nature or the

arts, and does not require any association with religion or God. Danny elaborated his personal stance on being spiritual but not religious,

I don't have religious beliefs, so I have my own ideas about spirituality and what it means to me in terms of understanding life, which is personal, individual, and a way of living for me. It helps you; for me it is about having an understanding that makes sense to me.

4.13.5 Nature and Zen

In terms of secular spirituality, some participants associated spirituality with nature. For Fran and Grace, the complexity of life and the natural world are miraculous. These things give them a sense of awe and wonder while making them feel insignificant in relation to this evolutionary creation, the immense natural ever-expanding existence. Fran explained, "When I'm in the natural space, and there's this feelings of awe or wonder or insignificance in how I am in relation to this creation."

According to Grace, Zen meditation is associated with spirituality, and is all about "shedding everything and just being". She shared her experience with Zen while she was in Japan during a tea ceremony, where the Tea Master explained how each step in the tea making process is important.

He said, 'It's not about the tea; it's about the respect of the Tea Maker for the guests. So, in this tea room, where the outside wall doesn't intrude, is like a little fantasy space and where, in going through as well as I can, as rigidly as I can, through these procedures to make that tea, I am doing you honour and totally sublimating myself. It's *your* enjoyment of the tea. And doing it right is to ensure that *your*

enjoyment is heightened from the environment, from every action, and I am irrelevant’.

Grace further explained that she felt the humility of the Tea Master, sitting still within that peaceful environment for hours and doing nothing is a very special experience. She added that this is “Zen meditation” and it helps people clear their headspace and look within and is another form of spirituality.

Although Alex did not use the word Zen, he discussed similar concepts. Some of his interests included meditation, yoga, and chakras. He also believed that “being in the moment” is about just being there and doing just what one needs to do and not think about anything else.

4.13.6 Music and the Arts

Hayden, Ellen, and Alex discussed the connection between spirituality, music, and the arts. Hayden was of the opinion that the arts, especially painting, help people connect with their spirituality. Ellen further added that spirituality is reflected in the notion of Gaia, arts, music, and dance. Reflecting on her days as a teacher, she believed that as part of developing their spirituality, students sang the national anthem and read the Lord’s Prayer regularly.

Alex had an understanding of the healing effect of music as he had an aunt who practiced spiritual health and wellbeing through music. Being a musician himself, Alex shared his experience with listening to music,

Listening to music is something that I find can have a particular meditative effect and [...] it allows you to focus on something other than what’s around you. So, I can listen to music and be totally immersed to the music, oblivious to what’s around me. It seems like no

time has passed, when it's been an hour. I think, in terms of brain function, it's just a change in perception but it also has the effect of calming and produces stability. At times, when I've been stressed by work or stressed by school, other things going on, I found that having an experience like that can change the way I feel.

In contrast, Carol was of the opinion that people should trust reason and not the metaphysical aspects of life. She stated that people who use music and dance as part of their spirituality, and believe that it can influence nature, are irrational and dangerous.

I look at people who dance to particular patterns to make it rain. When it rains, they rejoice in the spirit world, because they dance and they please the spirit by dancing. I will tell you why it rained; it rained because of the whole system of the climate, it didn't rain because of any kind of their music. It rained because physical factors that affect precipitation, and caused it to rain; caused the water to fall out of the sky. Nothing to do with who danced what and where."

4.13.7 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory was discussed by Alex and Grace as being associated with spirituality. Alex explained, "In a sense, when I go back to the idea of spirituality, it is to do with self-actualization." Grace felt that "Spirituality even moves beyond Maslow's hierarchy in that it's beyond the self-actualization." She added that spirituality is about taking the "me" out of actualisation and is not as structured as the theory suggests.

4.14 Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE)

Table 4.8 demonstrates that five academics in TSBE perceived spirituality as being secular, despite acknowledging spirituality's association with religion. Three participants associated wonderment of the universe and the beauty of life with secular spirituality. Three academics practiced meditation in search of the higher self, but not a higher being or God. Three academics stated that they did not consider themselves as religious or spiritual but were good people, while eight participants, who were atheist or agnostic or not strongly religious, stated that they were spiritual and had a personal philosophy of life.

Table 4.8

TSBE Academics' viewpoints of concepts associated with secular spirituality

Subthemes	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Non-religious and worldviews	x			x			x		x	x
Wonderment and awe	x			x				x		
Not spiritual or religious but good person	x			x					x	
Spiritual but not religious	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory						x				

Description of the Data

4.14.1 Non-Religious and Worldviews

Despite the fact that all participants in TSBE associated spirituality with religion in some ways, some participants felt that spirituality could also be dissociated from religion as it incorporates wider views than those in religion. Most participants in TSBE were non-religious or atheist, and some advocated the non-existence of God, but were respectful of those who believe. William felt challenged talking about the

notion of spirituality, and explained that he saw spirituality as “a connection to something bigger than you” and “whether you can use it as a guiding light to interact with the world [...] It’s going to come down to people ... how they’re making sense of the world around them.”

While talking about spirituality separate from religion, Toby was of the opinion that living an ethical and value-laden life, helping others, and giving them advice on how to live a better life in a pastoral care role is also part of spirituality. He added that although the concept of pastoral care comes from religion, he does not associate it with religion, and that it is about showing concern and caring about people. “It’s like being on a runway and you grab a spirit, and you hold them in the air, and you run as fast as you can.” He explained that his role is that of helping others work through their spiritual needs, without associating these with any religious belief. He also felt that spirituality’s roots in religion make it easier for religion to “hijack it” and lead to indoctrination. Toby was quite comfortable with the metaphysical or the unknown, and had no desire to understand what his own spirituality was all about.

Some academics stated that they were spiritual but not religious, and have their own rules by which they live. Toby and Zoey also believed in the non-existence of an afterlife. An atheist, Zoey talked about his belief, stating,

I am a very committed atheist, but I respect people’s religious beliefs. I don’t believe in God, but personally I find it almost inconceivable that intelligent people can’t see that the world is what it is. I understand why people have a belief and a need to connect to things [...], I just don’t have that belief. Maybe if I was going to face my last five minutes on Earth, I might find it. Who knows?

Some participants discussed concepts like awareness, emotional intelligence, sense of responsibility, kindness, behaviour, and peace as part of secular spirituality. It is worth noting that Reese was critical of secular spirituality as people's definition of secular spirituality was not well defined. She explained that people have taken bits and pieces of religion that suit them, and call this secular spirituality.

4.14.2 Wonderment and Awe

Quinn, Toby, and Xavier felt that spirituality gives them a sense of wonderment and of "being alive," without thinking about religion in any way. Toby said, "Spirituality has a sense of wonderment in it, and it would be dead boring if it didn't. I'm happy with that sense of wonderment."

4.14.3 Not Spiritual or Religious but Good Person

Reese, a religious academic, believed that most people identify with Christian values, but do not accept that they are spiritual beings. Quinn felt the same, stating that he had a Christian upbringing, with high moral codes of conduct that underpin the way he lives, yet he neither believes in any religion nor considers himself spiritual. Yann further added that it is possible to be a good person without being subjected to the indoctrination he found in religion, but by being non-religious or non-spiritual. Although some academics were atheists and believed in being good, some academics were critical of the notion of not believing in God or religion. William states, "Ask an atheist that when their plane's crashing, whether they believe in God."

4.14.4 Not Religious or Atheist but Spiritual with a Personal Philosophy of Life

Val explained that there is a belief system that underpins spirituality, but it does not imply its association with religion. She asserted,

I'm not talking about God sense or that type of thing, but more in how you want your family to run; how do you want them to integrate with one another; how do you want them to integrate into the community?

You have a belief because it was probably handed to you from your parents, and you either accept them or reject them, or have a little bit in between. Same with me, [...] pass on the good bits to your children, your kids, and hopefully you do a good job.”

4.14.5 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Only one person, Val, briefly talked about secular spirituality being associated with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, in the sense of developing oneself and self-worth to make a difference in other people's lives by helping them.

4.15 Comparing FoE and TSBE

Although academics in both faculties believed that the concept of spirituality was associated with religion, Table 4.9 demonstrates that the majority also viewed spirituality as having aspects different from religion. Some academics in both faculties discussed the notion of wonderment and the immensity of the universe as being secular spirituality. Some academics in both faculties also talked about themselves as not being spiritual or religious, but as being good people; or as being spiritual but not religious; or as having their own philosophies of life. Academics in

FoE discussed spirituality in the context of nature, Zen, music, the arts, and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, with only one participant in TSBE discussing the last.

Table 4.9

FoE and TSBE Academics' viewpoints of concepts associated with secular spirituality

Subthemes	FoE	TSBE	TOTAL
Non-religious and worldviews	6	5	11
Wonderment and awe	4	3	7
Not spiritual or religious but a good person	2	3	5
Spiritual but not religious	3	8	11
Nature and Zen	5	0	5
Music and the arts	3	0	3
Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs	2	1	3

4.16 Discussion on Secular Spirituality

As discussed earlier, all participants associated spirituality with religion, but six academics in FoE and five in TSBE also viewed spirituality as secular. These participants were of the opinion that spirituality could be viewed from both religious and secular approaches. Some also advocated that spirituality does not need religion to exist. Historically, spirituality was initially always associated with religion, and the distinction from religion, as a separate secular concept, arose in the twentieth century (Zinnbauer et al., 1997). As a relatively new concept, people still think of religion when speaking of spirituality, and the distinction is challenging as secular spirituality uses terminology used within religious contexts, such as "wholeness" (Palmer, 2010). Feldmeier (2016) is of the opinion that when religious experiences lack deeper meaning and purpose, people turn to secular spirituality to be able to connect to something meaningful and spiritual.

Nguyen (2016) explains that secular spirituality is about reaching out of oneself, to reflect and be able to deal with issues that do not come from religion, but are present within society through meaning, values, and integrity. Concepts like “connectedness”, “meaning”, and “purpose” have their roots in religion but are also used in secular spirituality (Crossman, 2003).

Without being tied to any religion, some participants in both faculties felt a sense of wonderment and awe in the universe and nature, which made them feel spiritually alive, and made life interesting. Welch and Koth (2013, p. 615) explain that there is “a reciprocal dynamic between our human journey to look inward (experiencing awe, wonder, and mystery), and to look outward to connect with and link ourselves to community, nature, the world, and the universe”. Secular spirituality includes concepts from religion such as morals, ethics, values, wonderment, and love and can be found in everything from the mystical to the mundane (King, 2007) and can bring joy to people.

Some academics from FoE and most from TSBE were not religious, but believed they were spiritual. Buxton (2016) explains that, in Australia, there is a growing population who regard themselves as spiritual but not religious. Such people do not engage in any formal religious practices, but believe in experiencing spirituality and may hold beliefs, and have practices around the sacred, but without any institutionalisation (Pargament, 2013). Hendrix and Hamlet (2009, p. 4) explain that “Some scholars disconnect spirituality from religion, while offering a definition tied to everything from an internal compass to community to powers emanating from ecological resources.” However, Rowson (2014) feels that people who consider themselves spiritual and not religious get criticized by both religious and atheistic individuals for their non-conformity to either of the viewpoints.

Some academics in both faculties stated that they were neither spiritual nor religious, but considered themselves good people, and that they had a personal philosophy of life. King (2007) cites Nash and McLennan (2001) who say secular spirituality “is to be found equally in the mystical and the mundane, the scientific and the irrational, the therapeutic and the pedagogical, the personal and the universal” (p. 105). Secular spirituality is more individualised and focuses on the development of the more humane self (Natsis, 2016). It is possible these academics did not consider themselves spiritual as they were unclear about spirituality having dissociated from religion or were unaware of secular spirituality.

A majority of the academics in FoE also discussed secular spirituality in terms of nature and Zen meditation, and some shared personal experiences. Korac-Kakabadse et al. (2002) explain that the fading support that organised religion in western society used to provide has encouraged people to look towards other cultures and philosophies for spiritual nourishment. This has resulted in people finding spirituality in Zen Buddhism and other eastern practices. These require a focus on nature and looking within oneself, within a sacred space (Copenhaver, 2013).

Three participants in FoE but none in TSBE explained how music helps build their spirituality within a secular context. Hendricks (2011) clarifies that music is spiritual in nature and provides a spiritual experience to the musician and the listeners affecting their emotions. According to Palmer (2010), music is like a bridge that connects “the inner and outer worlds” of people and moves them to “higher states of mind” (p. 57).

Only two academics from FoE and one from TSBE discussed Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs theory in terms of spirituality, and suggested that it about going beyond the basic human need of self-actualisation. O’Connor and Yballe (2007)

discussed the theory by explaining that people move up the hierarchy when their needs are met, including spiritual needs. People who reach self-actualisation are attuned to their personal nature, interconnect well with others, are purposeful and have values, and are deeply connected to their spirituality.

The data from the participants reveal numerous concepts which are similar to those discussed while defining spirituality. Religious and secular views on spirituality overlap, with academics discussing the same concepts repeatedly, with slight variations. The reason for this could be the lack of clarity of the term “spirituality” because of its roots in religion, and having similar concepts.

Crossman (2009) presents a conceptual overview of secular spirituality, which echoes ideas discussed by the academics. Citing Nash (2003), she states that secular spirituality is “a form of resistance toward organized religion but a less contentious discourse.” She adds, “Broadly speaking, however, religion could be described as a public institution underpinned by rituals developed over time in response to sacred texts and secular spirituality as a looser, less systematic, private interpretation generated by individuals” (p. 239). Crossman (2007) adds, “‘Secular spirituality’ respects individually interpreted spiritual perspectives, is non-partisan, [and] pan-religious in its tendency to respect all religions without giving preference to any one or groups of religions in particular.”

4.17 Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the first research question concerning academics’ views of spirituality. The data reveal academics’ personal interpretations of “The Nature of Spirituality”, captured through three themes: “Defining Spirituality”,

“Spirituality and Religion”, and “Secular Spirituality”; with their associated subthemes.

The data also revealed that while academics were from two different faculties, the way they viewed spirituality depended more on their personal beliefs rather than on their discipline alignments. Interestingly, all academics associated spirituality with religion, irrespective of their beliefs, but their understanding of the concept varied.

Academics with religious backgrounds were more aware of spirituality and associated the concept with religion. While most of these academics believed that spirituality is a broader concept than religion, they also avoided discussing it outside religious contexts. For example, Reese felt that most concepts used in secular spirituality are from religion, and people who do not want to associate with religion use whatever suits them and call it spirituality. All eight religious academics discussed the various practices and rituals associated with their understanding of spirituality, which include reading the Bible, going to church, connection with God and others and service to humanity. Only three religious academics from FoE discussed spirituality that could also be non-religious, with worldviews.

While there were only five non-religious academics, most of them had had a religious upbringing, but as adults they became secular or agnostic. These academics also felt that religion had tied them to rites and rituals and felt they needed to explore more, and had varied experiences with different religious orders. They also considered themselves as “good people” who may or may not be spiritual, but were definitely not religious. Most of them believed in the metaphysical and some in a deity, but were unsure of how religion fitted in. They believed in ethics, morals, values, and justice, and associated these concepts with their notion of spirituality. They also felt that their behaviour towards others is respectful and kind, and believed

in connecting with people, and be of service to them, without ulterior motives. Some of these academics also believed in Zen and meditation, and felt a connection with nature with a feeling of awe and wonder. For example Grace felt that she was very insignificant in the universe, and loved watching the sky at night with awe and wonder. To her that was her spirituality.

The atheist academics, who were six in number, had very strong opinions about spirituality being associated with religion and some showed a lack of knowledge outside its religious contexts. However, as the interview progressed, most of these academics reflected on their understanding of the concepts associated with spirituality, which led them to acknowledge the presence of spirituality within their lives in some ways, but all asserted that the concept had evolved from religion. Carol felt that there was no place for religion anywhere and was critical of various religious practices. She believed in being an ethical and moral person, and respecting others, but felt that religion and spirituality are infantile. She asserted that religion and spirituality are myths and are associated with each other and cannot be separated, even when talking about secular spirituality.

The data suggests that there are varied viewpoints of spirituality that academics brought to light, and at times, academics seemed confused about how to talk about it. While religious academics were firm about their understanding of spirituality, they were also very careful when answering the first interview question and it took them time to open up completely, despite the assurance that the data will be confidential and de-identified.

The non-religious academics were the most comfortable talking about their notion of spirituality and suggested various concepts that they believed are associated

with spirituality. Most atheist academics felt the most challenged with spirituality, but eventually were able to talk about it; some in positive ways while others in negative.

The data also suggest that defining spirituality academically is still a challenge, mainly because of the diverse concepts associated with it. While some concepts were separated as religious and secular in the subthemes, they all seemed to overlap, with the exception of the concept of God, and religious practices (which are specifically religious). The term spirituality has been used interchangeably with religion for a long time and the awareness of it having a separate identity and being broader than religion still needs to be developed. The fact is that people regard it as a personal thing, and find it in deeply personal places. There are, perhaps, commonalities in what is felt – some sense of transcendence and connection with people, place, or something above oneself — but it is experienced and articulated differently by people, based on their experiences and religious backgrounds. The various concepts discussed by academics are very similar to the literature discussed and confirms that spirituality is a concept that requires further study to be able to get clarity of what it could truly mean for academics. The next chapter will respond partly to the second research question and address the topic of “Spirituality in Higher Education.

Chapter 5

Spirituality and the Higher Education Curriculum

5.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses and discusses the academics' view of spirituality and the higher and education curriculum, the second topic identified in the data. This topic was identified after the interview data were further analysed to address the second research question:

How do these academics perceive the incorporation of spirituality within their respective curricula and its role in the development of the professional identities of their students?

This question is concerned with how academics perceive the incorporation of spirituality within the higher education curricula. While all participants discussed the incorporation of spirituality within their respective curricula, they also voiced their viewpoints on how spirituality is addressed within Australian education and

curriculum documents. Figure 5.1 shows the second topic, “Spirituality in the Higher Education Curriculum,” and its three associated themes: “Spirituality in Australian Curriculum Documents”, “A Curriculum with Spirituality”, and “Teachable Concepts Associated with Spirituality”. These emerged during the data analysis process.

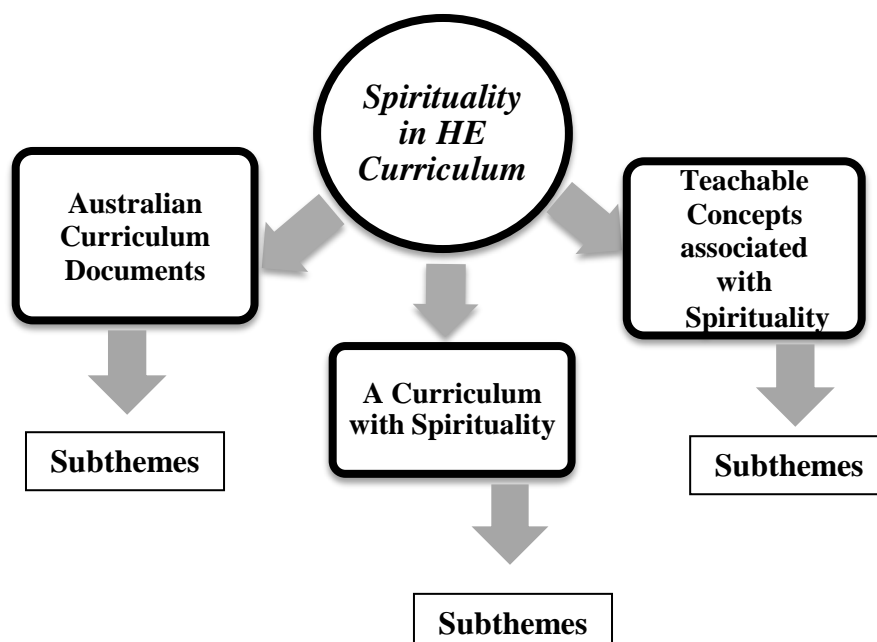


Figure 5.1. A diagrammatical representation of themes associated with the second topic “Spirituality in the Higher Education Curriculum”

As in the previous chapter, the discussion associated with each theme includes tables that identify the subthemes found during the data analysis, by faculty, with a cumulative data table that demonstrates the similarities and differences between faculties. A concluding discussion for each theme will relate the findings to the literature.

5.2 Theme 1: Spirituality in Spirituality in Australian Curriculum Documents

The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians

(MDEGYA) was a document developed by the Australian government's Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training, and Youth Affairs, in 2008. As mentioned in the literature review, it states that "schools play a vital role in promoting the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, moral, *spiritual* and aesthetic development and wellbeing of young Australians, and in ensuring the nation's ongoing economic prosperity and social cohesion" (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD), 2008, p. 4, emphasis added). The MDEGYA was a framework for curriculum development for schools in Australia, and addressed the developmental needs of young school-going Australians, including their spiritual development. Although this present study focuses on higher education, the inclusion of spirituality within the national school curriculum is particularly relevant to the Faculty of Education, which provides teacher education. This required an examination of the extent to which academics were aware of MDEGYA, and other curriculum documents, the way they perceived the inclusion of spirituality in the document. Some academics also discussed their awareness of spirituality within Australian school and higher education, especially within the higher education context. Tables 5.1 and 5.2 present the data about the Australian curriculum documents with a focus on MDEGYA from FoE and TSBE, respectively, while Table 5.3 presents the cumulative data from the two faculties.

5.3 Faculty of Education (FoE)

Table 5.1 shows that out of the nine participants from FoE, six were aware of the *Melbourne Declaration* (MDEGYA) and the inclusion of spirituality as one of its objectives. The six participants explained that the definition presented in the document is fairly vague, and can be interpreted in many ways. They were of the opinion that the inclusion of the word “spirituality” was associated with religious contexts, was done with a view to employing clergymen or school chaplains, and was politically motivated. The reasons for these views will be discussed later in the chapter. When discussing the Australian curriculum, all participants from FoE discussed teacher education, as this study was focused on higher education, even though there is no Australian *Higher Education* Curriculum. The Australian Curriculum is generally referred to the K-12 school curriculum, however the academics from FoE discussed spirituality within the teacher education curriculum. Additionally, some academics seemed to be talking about the school curriculum interchangeably with teacher education blurring the line between the two. This is evidenced in the way the academics discussed the concept of spirituality in the MDEGYA, which was mainly for schools, but was taught in teacher education, which they referred to as the Australian Curriculum. Out of the nine academics from FoE interviewed for this study, three were aware of the term spirituality used in the Australian curriculum documents, and six discussed the reasons for the inclusion of spirituality within the different curriculum documents developed by the government.

Table 5.1

FoE Academics' perspectives on the inclusion of spirituality in Australian Curriculum Documents

Subthemes	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Spirituality in MDEGYA and the Australian curriculum documents	x	x	x		x		x	x	
Employment of clergymen or school chaplains; related to religion and politics	x	x	x		x		x	x	

Description of the Data

5.3.1 Spirituality in MDEGYA and the Australian Curriculum Documents

MDEGYA

Most participants were of the opinion that within the *Melbourne Declaration* spirituality has not been defined and that vagueness allows it to mean anything from religious to secular interpretations. Bailey said, “I think it’s interesting that the *Melbourne Declaration* is very clear about having spirituality, but I don’t know where it defines what it is and how should it be taught.” He further adds,

There is certainly [...] no cohesive set of beliefs about what spirituality is and how it can be positively developed that I’m aware of. I don’t know if there is a consistent approach to doing that in teacher education or in schools, so, I think it’s a very, it’s left fairly vague, in the *Melbourne Declaration*. [...] I’m not aware of any really targeted material in teacher education or in schools that develop spirituality from the national agenda.

Carol was of the opinion that, while the *Melbourne Declaration* discusses the word spirituality, it is important to investigate what it means.

It is worthwhile, because it is in there, and it is not put in there merely as a token. If, however, one defines spirituality, and if spirituality is to play a role in teaching, learning, existing, then it is worth knowing [...] and investigating what we're talking about. Otherwise, it is a stupid token word [...]. Just put it in there, to satisfy the religious folk.

Ellen was one of the contributors to the preparation of the *Melbourne Declaration* document and discussed the reason for its vagueness. She explained,

As a senior academic I was involved with critiquing the *Melbourne Declaration*, and there were 15 of us. We gave the advice that the [government] ministers really wanted. In some ways, what the *Melbourne Declaration* is trying to do, and to include spirituality, it's trying to say that education and the person are multi-dimensional but, there's also a very strong focus in the *Melbourne Declaration* on outputs.

She felt that the word "spiritual" was added in MDEGYA to give "lip service" to those government ministers.

As an educator, Grace taught values to her students and believed she was teaching spirituality, which she felt was similar to the way the *Melbourne Declaration* presents spirituality. Hayden's opinion on the inclusion of spirituality in MDEGYA, and not defining it clearly, was that it allowed people "personal freedom" and to "find some way for them to understand where they might fit in the scheme of things."

Australian Curriculum Documents by the Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority (ACARA)

Carol, Ellen, and Alex explained that the Australian curriculum, whether at school level or higher education, encompasses many concepts, of which some may be associated with spirituality directly or indirectly. Alex felt that spirituality within the Australian school curriculum is more than what Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority (ACARA) offers. Talking about teacher education, he explained, “I think a curriculum based around spirituality is very general and it talks about principles.” He continued, “Because spirituality is to do with everything working, so my curriculum [teacher education], that I use to make decisions, is based around achieving that [outcome] point.” Alex who taught pre-service teachers believed that when “individuals” in his classroom “learn” something more than what was presented in the curriculum, that to him is spirituality, and it “could be different in different contexts”.

Carol wanted her pre-service teachers to develop general capabilities as presented in ACARA (2015) for school students, so that they are able to teach the same at school. She explained, “I think they are getting ethical reasoning and empathy into the curriculum, [...] it is there in the “general capabilities” in the Australian curriculum.” She elaborated, “I think the greatest gift is to give people the capacity to make well informed decisions.” She added,

The whole curriculum should respect humans as learners, respect knowledge for its own sake, as well the knowledge for the greatness it can create. We need to respect humans, we need to respect knowledge, we need to respect innovation, we need to respect that the possibilities of the fruits of our intellectual endeavours can create a beautiful world, can sustain a beautiful world. It is a beautiful world, people are

beautiful and the curricula need to reflect this, I don't think they do at the moment.

The Health and Physical Education Curriculum by the Department of Education, Tasmania (DET)

Danny and Ira were teaching a unit within teacher education that addressed spirituality as spiritual wellbeing (SWB). While the DET developed a curriculum for schools that addressed SWB for students, a unit on the document was developed to create awareness amongst pre-service teachers.

The government in Australia provides a framework for curriculum development, especially at school level, and as such teacher education uses the same documents to prepare curricula for their pre-service teachers, in higher education.

5.3.2 Employment of clergymen or school chaplains; related to religion

Most participants in FoE were of the opinion that the word spirituality was vaguely defined in the *Melbourne Declaration*, but they also perceived its inclusion to have religious and political underpinnings. Alex explained, "Documents like the *Melbourne Declaration* and other curricular documents should always be considered for their political role that they play in a society that's still traditionally based in Christianity for the inclusion of the word spirituality."

Grace was of the opinion that the government included spirituality in MDEGYA for religious and political reasons. She elaborated that positions were created within schools to "employ clergymen", called "chaplains", who had religious agendas, and schools had to hire them to comply with government requirements. Grace stated, "You want spirituality and values? Employ chaplains! And that's driven

from the Prime Minister down. That’s not doing what you want.” She added, “Basically, they [chaplains] have been trying to recruit people for their religion.”

Hayden believed that while spirituality in the *Melbourne Declaration* relates to personal freedom, it also enables people to identify themselves with religion. He added that schools that offer religious education employ government-funded chaplains to teach their students.

5.4 Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE)

As shown in Table 5.2, only two academics in TSBE had even heard of the *Melbourne Declaration*. Two participants who had not heard about MDEGYA, but who were made aware of its content in the interviews, discussed the inclusion of spirituality in a government document, in relation to its political and religious underpinnings. Finally, two academics talked about spirituality in the higher education curriculum within Australia.

Table 5.2
TSBE Academics’ perspectives on the inclusion of spirituality in MDEGYA and the Australian Curriculum Documents

Subthemes	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Heard about MDEGYA		x							x	
Employment of clergymen or school chaplains; related to religion and politics				x		x				
Spirituality in the higher education curriculum within Australia						x				x

Description of the Data

5.4.1 Heard About the MDEGYA

Only two participants in TSBE had heard about the *Melbourne Declaration*, but did not have any opinion about the inclusion of spirituality in the document, mainly because it pertains to school or teacher education rather than business education.

5.4.2 Employment of Clergymen or School Chaplains; Related to Religion and Politically Motivated

Toby and Val had not heard about MDEGYA, but asked about it in their interviews. The sections that talked about spirituality were read to them, which resulted in their feedback. Val questioned whether the document had practical application in relation to the improvement of school education. She felt that spirituality was added in order for bureaucrats to secure their positions in their elected offices, and to provide lip service to the clergy.

Toby felt that school chaplains were not there for religion, but for spirituality in schools. He believed that some schools employed chaplains, while others hired social workers depending on the requirements of those schools. He added that sometimes, to fill the position of chaplains, some schools employ chaplains as headmasters, who are able to satisfy government or political requirements, of “quality of education in terms of the spiritual content”. He too questioned whether including spirituality in the *Melbourne Declaration* or chaplains in schools would improve the quality of education overall.

5.4.3 Spirituality in the Higher Education Curriculum within Australia

Similar to FoE, academics in TSBE also discussed the Australian Curriculum in terms of Higher Education. This was partly in response to question four of the interview schedule (see Figure 3.1), that explored a building a curriculum with spirituality. Val and Zoey briefly talked about the Australian higher education curriculum and spirituality.

Val felt that analysing the higher education curriculum within Australia is important as it allows people to view knowledge from different perspectives. She asserted that the independent search for the truth, and challenging one's understanding of certain facts is spirituality, and she felt that as she was teaching it at the business school it was present within the Australian higher education curriculum.

Zoey stated, "I do believe in a spirituality in education, but because I'm starting with the individual as something to be educated rather than a body of knowledge to be given." She explained that she helped her students to be intrinsically motivated to learn and be passionate about their learning. She added that within Australia, the higher education curriculum, which is undefined, spirituality should "be a transformational process, regardless of the topic" and viewed "the spirituality of all of this is that, every student has a potential journey that they can go on, and my job is to see if I can actually invite them to go on a journey". She added that while spirituality was part of her teaching, business education in Australia generally addresses student learning outcomes in the curriculum, and is exam focused. She felt that the Australian curriculum does not focus on transformational learning, and as such cannot help students develop their spirituality.

5.5 Comparing FoE and TSBE

The *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, 2008* (MDEGYA) is a document related to school education and as such pertains more directly to the FoE. As seen in Table 5.3, most academics in FoE knew about MDEGYA and were able to discuss it, acknowledging that the definition of spirituality provided in the document is unclear. Except for two, most academics in TSBE were unaware of MDEGYA, and were unable to comment on it. Six academics in FoE and two in TSBE were of the opinion that “spirituality” had been added in the *Melbourne Declaration* was politically and religiously motivated, and a driver to employ clergymen or chaplains in schools. Most academics in both faculties were unaware or unclear of the inclusion of the concept of spirituality within the education curriculum documents. Three participants in FoE stated that spirituality within the curriculum documents encompassed many ideas such as nature and general capabilities of students. However, the two academics from TSBE who made reference to the curriculum were unsure of spirituality’s place in it.

Table 5.3

FoE and TSBE Academics’ perspectives on the inclusion of spirituality in MDEGYA and the Australian Curriculum Documents

Subthemes	FoE	TSBE	TOTAL
Spirituality in MDEGYA and other curriculum documents	6	0	6
Employment of clergymen or school chaplains; related to religion and politically motivated	6	2	7
Spirituality in higher education curriculum	0	2	3
Heard about MDEGYA	0	2	2

5.6 Discussion on Academics' Perspectives on Spirituality in MDEGYA and the Australian Curriculum

The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, 2008 (MDEGYA) (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, (DEECD) 2009), was developed in agreement with all ministries of education in Australia, and states “The curriculum will enable students to develop knowledge in the disciplines of English, mathematics, science, languages, humanities and the arts; to understand the *spiritual*, moral and aesthetic dimensions of life; and open up new ways of thinking” (DEECD, 2009, p. 13, emphasis added).

While most participating academics from FoE knew about the MDEGYA, only two from TSBE were aware of it, likely because the FoE is mainly concerned with teacher education, which requires an awareness of government policies and documents, like MDEGYA, that affect students at the school level. According to Donnelly (2014, p. 8), “*The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* is the roadmap that all education ministers have agreed to when formulating education policy, and it is generally cited by ACARA as the basis for the development of the national curriculum.” MDEGYA also suggests the various components that make a well-balanced education, which also include the spiritual and aesthetic development of students (Donnelly, 2014).

Most participants in FoE were of the view that the use of the spirituality in MDEGYA is vague and has been kept this way to keep it all inclusive, allowing a wide range of meanings which could be religious or secular in nature. Some FoE participants felt that the lack of definition of spirituality in MDEGYA allows people

freedom to understand their own spirituality. Bini (2009) acknowledges that spirituality is difficult to define because of its complex and experiential nature, and so some literature avoids giving a specific definition of spirituality, which may be reflected in MDEGYA. Nonetheless, MDEGYA connects spirituality to spiritual wellbeing, self-worth, self-awareness, and personal identity (p. 9), and addresses all aspects of being human (Bini, 2009). A clearer definition of spirituality was provided in the 1999 New Zealand Health and Physical Education curriculum document that defines spiritual wellbeing as “the values and beliefs that determine the way people live, the search for meaning and purpose in life, and personal identity and self-awareness (For some individuals and communities spiritual wellbeing is linked to a particular religion; for others, it is not.) (p. 31),” (cited in Fraser, 2007, p. 291). Perhaps this definition, or similar, should be included in an updated version of Australian curriculum documents to give clarity to the place of spirituality.

Most academics in FoE and one in TSBE were of the opinion that spirituality was included in MDEGYA to ensure employment of clergy or chaplains within educational settings, and was related to religion and politically motivated. Some participants from FoE asserted that it was the Prime Minister at the time who wanted to bring spirituality and values into the education system, and to please the clergy they created the role of chaplains within the school system. They felt that these chaplains were meant to provide spiritual support to students but instead seem to be recruiting students for their religion. Discussing the religious and political underpinning of including spirituality within MDEGYA, Snider and McPhedran (2014) state that approximately seventy percent of Australians consider themselves spiritual and believe in God or a higher power. As Australia is a democracy, most of its ministers in the government are likely to be religious or spiritual. Warhurst (2007), cited in

Crabb (2009, p. 263), argues that ““more than any other federal government’ senior Howard government ministers ‘have been active, in word and deed, in emphasising ... their religious credentials and beliefs.’”

Some participants in FoE added that, to comply with government requirements schools hire chaplains or clergy, which most participants felt was just a way of ensuring jobs for these people. The intended and actual roles of such chaplains have been debated over time. Barker (2015) explains that, in 2006, the National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP) was announced in Australia by the Prime Minister at the time, John Howard. The role of chaplains was created to provide “pastoral care” and support students’ “spiritual wellbeing”, within schools. The government provided funds to schools through grants, for these roles through “chaplaincy providers” who selected the chaplains for schools (p. 20). Barker (2015, p. 30) cites the Prime Minister’s words about what he meant by chaplains,

Yes, I am calling them chaplains because that has a particular connotation in our language ... And as you know I’m not overwhelmed by political correctness. To call a chaplain a counsellor is to bow to political correctness. Chaplain has a particular connotation, people understand it, they know exactly what I’m talking about.

Donnelly (2014) clarifies that, while Australia has a Judeo-Christian heritage, MDEGYA was designed to cater to the various cultures within the country, but there was still a strong underpinning of Judeo-Christian philosophies. Since 2006, the ANSCP evolved to provide “secular pastoral care” to school students, supporting their students’ spiritual wellbeing, and is not based on any traditional religious denomination (Fisher, 2012). According to James and Benson (2014), besides providing “social and emotional support” to students, school chaplains provide

service to the wider community during times of need and are available to all people irrespective of their religious beliefs.

The arguments put forth by most academics in both faculties was that the inclusion of spirituality in MDEGYA was religiously and politically motivated, to employ chaplains, and support students' spiritual wellbeing seems to be in consensus with Barker (2015) and Crabb (2009). However, there is no mention of chaplains or chaplaincy within MDEGYA. The NSCP was developed before MDEGYA and continues until now and literature does not show any link between the MDEGYA and employment of chaplains.

Very few participants in FoE and TSBE were aware of the presence of spirituality in any form within the curriculum documents prepared by government agencies in Australia. Some academics in FoE were of the opinion that spirituality is a term that was used in the Australian national school curriculum in a generalised way, and was open to various interpretations. They asserted that it focuses on individual learning, and spiritual wellbeing.

While these participants seemed unaware of the inclusion of spirituality within the school curriculum, they made an attempt to reflect on what it could mean. Some of them discussed the MDEGYA and spirituality, and stated that, as there was no strong mandate to teach spirituality in schools, teacher education does not focus on it. DEECD (2008) and ACARA (2015) suggest that teaching spirituality or concepts associated with spirituality to young Australians could lead them to be responsible and productive adults, who would lead fulfilling lives to contribute to Australia's social and economic prosperity. The lack of awareness or not having a strong mandate raises the question of whether spirituality was included in the Australian national

school curriculum (ACARA, 2015) to cater to a specific religious few, or to genuinely develop students' understanding of spiritual concepts.

Some academics from both faculties also stated there are general capabilities expected of their students and is mentioned in the curriculum frameworks developed by the government for schools, some of which are also carried forward and modified in higher education. For example, higher education graduates from both faculties are expected to have developed the individual or self through transformational learning, developed ethical and legal boundaries, learnt to be respectful, have empathy, and are conscious of the environment and sustainability; all these capabilities are related to spirituality. One participant from TSBE also talked about independent investigation of the truth one seeks and internalising it through learning and development as an aspect of spirituality. While there is no national curriculum for higher education in Australia, perhaps the academics from both faculties were referring to the educational outcomes designed in the Australian Qualifications Framework.

The Australian Qualifications Framework Council (AQFC, 2013) has designated educational outcomes expected of graduates in various professions. Some of these learning outcomes are “generic” and seem to be similar to what the academics have stated as spirituality within the Australian higher education curriculum. According to AQFC, (2013, p. 11), these generic learning outcomes are under the following categories:

- fundamental skills, such as literacy and numeracy appropriate to the level and qualification type
- people skills, such as working with others and communication skills

- thinking skills, such as learning to learn, decision making and problem solving
- personal skills, such as self-direction and acting with integrity.

These generic outcomes are wide in range and seem to include a number of concepts, discussed earlier in the thesis, that are associated with spirituality. One example of this is working with others and communication, which require interconnectedness, which is related to spirituality. While the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQFC, 2013) does not specifically use the term spirituality in its documents, the objectives and explanation of their frameworks and policies can be interpreted in ways that would suggest that aspects of spirituality, such as integrity and decision-making to benefit all stakeholders, are expected by professionals in higher education. Higher education provides opportunities to students to engage with others independently and meaningfully, in ways that develop self-awareness and reflective practices (Waddock, 2013). These activities seem similar to developing one's spirituality.

The *Melbourne Declaration* (DEECD, 2008), the Australian Curriculum, (ACARA, 2012, 2013, 2015), the *Health and Physical Education Curriculum*, Tasmania (DET, 2008), and the Australian Qualifications Framework Council (AQFC, 2013), seem to have included spirituality, or concepts associated with the term, with the view that education is about helping students to open their minds to new ways of thinking, while gaining more knowledge and developing new skills.

One academic in TSBE was of the opinion that the business education curriculum in Australia needs to be redesigned with spirituality an integral part of that curriculum. Crossman (2015) states that academics worldwide have already been

trying to incorporate spirituality within the business curriculum, but it is a challenge due to its subjective nature. Rubin (2017) further adds that globally there is a need to redesign the higher education curriculum, and make it more relevant to contemporary requirements. The curriculum should address character qualities that include the spiritual aspects of people, in addition to addressing discipline knowledge. This would enable people to engage with others and the world in more meaningful and productive ways (Rubin, 2017).

5.7 Theme 2: A Curriculum with Spirituality

To examine how academics perceive the incorporation of spirituality within their respective curricula, the academics from FoE and TSBE presented their viewpoints on a curriculum with spirituality within their respective faculties, prompted, in part, by one of the interview questions which asked “How would you build a curriculum that could incorporate some of the concepts associated with spirituality and how would you teach them?” Tables 5.4 and 5.5 demonstrate their viewpoints by faculty, while Table 5.6 gives the cumulative data.

5.8 Faculty of Education (FoE)

Table 5.4 reveals that seven of the nine FoE academics felt that a unit on spirituality could be developed within the teacher education curriculum. Four participants were of the opinion that building a unit on spirituality requires an evaluation of its scope before commencement. Only one participant discussed having the concept of spirituality across the whole curriculum. Two participants were not in favour of teaching spirituality.

Table 5.4

FoE Academics' viewpoints about incorporating spirituality within the curriculum

Subthemes	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Spirituality and the curriculum	x		x	x	x	x	x		x
A unit on spirituality		x		x		x			x
Integrate spirituality into the whole curriculum					x				
Positive impact on students	x	x		x	x	x			x
Assessments	x								
No teaching of spirituality			x	x					

Description of the Data

5.8.1 Spirituality and the Curriculum

All academics in FoE discussed the inclusion of spirituality in the curriculum. While some were in favour, others felt that, as they were already teaching some aspects of spirituality within their curricula, a separate unit or other focus on “spirituality” would not be appropriate. Ivan used to teach “Health and Physical Education Pedagogy” to pre-service teachers, which included “a number of domains in health education, and spiritual domain is another one of those.” He explained that, in the past, spirituality was taught in some units, both at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, which evolved into important elements of health education within the teacher education program. Ivan shared his experience of how spirituality got included in the curriculum.

As I first came to the university [...], I took health education for years and in those days the general way of thinking about health education, spirituality wasn't part of it. But a few years into that, I had one of my

students who actually was fairly religious, and ended up teaching in a school that had a religious base to it. He got involved in this area and that made me think [...] should it be part of our curriculum? And they then introduced a health and wellbeing curriculum in Tasmania and spirituality was one of the areas that they included in it. That made me start to think about, how do I introduce that to students? So I got that person to come along and talk to my class and then I started doing the same.

Three participants—Bailey, Fran, and Grace—felt that they would not like to include spirituality as a separate concept within their teaching units. Bailey stated that, while teaching spirituality is important, there is no clear mandate to do so within the Australian professional standards for teachers or the Australian curriculum. He further asserted that as many units touch on some elements of spirituality—such as awareness, diversity, or holistic education—adding spirituality to this mix would not be justifiable. Alex stated that, given the chance to build a curriculum with spirituality, he would not write it down in the curriculum, but would incorporate it into his teaching on an individual basis, depending on the situation.

As an individual, in a specific context, I can go into a particular situation, say a classroom with a particular class and a particular goal, and that's where that curriculum is built. I can write it down, I can talk about it as something that had happened, but I can't transfer the spirituality to a different context to a different teacher, to a different class, to a different subject.

Similarly, Grace asserted that spirituality cannot be written down in the curriculum, and she would not do it. She felt that “the most fundamental is to think

about doing good, and improvement, and enhancing, and actualizing, [...] and to be efficient”, and believed that spirituality has to be built within the institutional culture, through practice. Fran did not want to include spirituality with teacher education curriculum because,

It might become prescriptive [...]. I think you have to have a very clear and a broader definition than I have, because my definition is quite narrow and quite in the private domain. [...] If you told me to build a course on spirituality in teacher education and it was really about values, morals and ethics, no problem. I could build that. Because I think, they are actually more tangible and more teachable. I don't think you can teach spirituality. I think you can poke and prod in a subtle way but it's in the personal domain.

While Bailey was not in favour of adding spirituality to the curriculum, he was of the opinion that if the university decided to teach spirituality, some of the units for teachers who would go into Christian schools could be designed for that specific cohort. He gave an example,

We would want them to look at the intersection between faith and the curriculum, or faith and the role of the teacher or spirituality and wellbeing. Then, with that group of people, and with that specificity, I would tailor it to what they would need. And there would be different level of freedom in terms of articulating my beliefs to the extent which they were consistent with the aims and goals of their unit, and their cohort.

Grace was of the opinion that including spirituality within the teacher education curriculum would naturally work well in religious-based institutions, as

they are hierarchical in nature. Perhaps she thought that these hierarchical relationships allow people to learn more about religious spirituality.

She argued that teaching spirituality based on religion does not guarantee the development of spirituality within the students.

Carol was of the opinion that the world and the people in it are beautiful and the curriculum should reflect this beauty, which she felt it currently does not. The curriculum should be built in a way that it “respects humans, knowledge, innovation, and possibilities for creating a better and more beautiful world.”

5.8.2 A Unit on Spirituality

Bailey, Danny, Fran, and Ivan talked about the scope of having a unit on spirituality within the context of teacher education. Bailey explained that having a unit on spirituality would need to be purposeful and broad in scope that caters to individual differences within the cohort taking the unit. He further elaborated that there would be greater scope if students wanted to specialise to teach within a particular religious system or a subject area relating to religion, but presently, the teacher education curriculum does not offer any such specialisation. Baily explained,

I know that the Catholic system is a big system, and there would be a number of our pre-service teachers who are going to go into that system. It probably wouldn't be a bad idea to think about how we look at people who need to teach the subject of religion and so certainly spirituality would be a part of that for a cohort of [religious] specialization. I think that would be appropriate but it would be good to know what is the position of the faculty towards that, or does that count

towards part of our course or do we encourage people to get credit for it and take it through another university?

Ivan was of the opinion that there should be compulsory unit on spirituality for everyone in teacher education programs, under the name of “Social and Emotional Learning”, which is already being taught at some levels within the faculty. He explained, “We have to deal with these topics because it’s closely aligned to emotional health and some people feel troubled by talking about emotional health, depression and all of these kinds of difficult topics.” He added that pre-service teachers who opt for this unit “always say they think it should be compulsory for everybody to do it.”

5.8.3 Integrate Spirituality into the Whole Curriculum

Only one academic, Ellen, was of the opinion that spirituality should be integrated into the whole teacher education curriculum. She asserted that units should include practices and rituals from other religions to enable teachers understand the issues around the diverse cultures that are now part of classroom settings. She explained, “For example, I think most teachers should know a little about Buddhism, because you’re not allowed to touch their child’s head, because that’s where Buddha resides.” She felt that “in some ways, there’s a huge amount of ignorance about how to behave or to be respectful of other people’s spiritual beliefs.”

5.8.4 Positive Impact on Students

Six participants from FoE felt that adding spirituality within the curriculum could have a positive impact on students. Alex explained that spirituality could help students identify themselves as spiritual beings, and find their place within society by building positive relationships with others. Danny was of a similar view, saying that

adding spirituality to the curriculum “would definitely have a positive influence on their [students’] own personal identities and how they then move forward as a teacher in classroom.” He also shared some experiences that he had with his students while teaching spiritual wellbeing and concepts associated with it, including happiness (see 6.5.5). The other five academics had similar viewpoints on how adding spirituality or concepts associated with spirituality could benefit students positively.

5.8.5 Assessment

Only one participant, Alex, who earlier stated that he would not write a curriculum with spirituality but would teach it in class, discussed the assessment of students’ understanding of spirituality. He shared his experience of using reflective practice as an assessment method and stated that this could be used in a unit on spirituality.

5.8.6 No Teaching of Spirituality

While Carol advocated that there is no such thing as spirituality and it should not be taught, she contradicted herself stating that it could be a good idea to incorporate spirituality or concepts associated with it within the curriculum. She stated, “I think that it is worthwhile, [...] if spirituality is to play a role in teaching, learning, existing, then it is worth knowing what we are talking about, it is worth investigating.”

Danny, who teaches spirituality and spiritual wellbeing in his unit, was critical about the scope of a complete unit on spirituality in teacher education. He explained that while a unit on spirituality at university is needed, careful consideration would be required to implement it within the higher education classroom. He asserted that the

fact that there is no cohesive academic definition of spirituality makes it challenging to teach it at the university.

5.9 Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE)

Table 5.5 reveals that nine academics in TSBE were in favour of building a curriculum with spirituality, but they felt that they needed to first identify how the university would offer the concept. Five academics believed that a unit or a course on spirituality would be a good option to include in the curriculum, while five were of the opinion that having spirituality, as a concept included across the board, could make the curriculum more “interesting” or “colourful”. Five academics discussed possible evaluation criteria for a unit or a curriculum on spirituality, and the measurable learning outcomes expected of students. Five participants also believed that building a spirituality curriculum would have a positive impact on students, and improve the way they see, think, and feel about “things” as stated by one academic. Only one academic in TSBE was of the opinion that spirituality should not be included in the business management curriculum.

Table 5.5

TSBE Academics' viewpoints about incorporating spirituality within the curriculum

Subthemes	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Spirituality and the curriculum	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
A unit on spirituality	x	x		x			x			x
Integrate spirituality into the whole curriculum		x	x				x	x		x
Positive impact on students		x			x		x	x		x
Assessments			x	x	x		x	x		
No teaching spirituality									x	

Description of the Data

5.9.1 Spirituality and the Curriculum

Almost all participants in TSBE talked about the inclusion of spirituality within the business school's curriculum. Xavier said that he would not write a curriculum with spirituality "in black and white", mainly because of its subjective nature, but he would incorporate spirituality in his teaching in the classroom. He explained, "As soon as you write it [spirituality] down like that, you then have to give the definitions. Oh, in this unit we mean by spirituality, this ... this ... this and this, which may not be the spirituality that that person has." Zoey believed that adding spirituality to the business school's curriculum would help students learn about themselves and the world through real life examples.

One participant, Reese, went beyond the business school's curriculum and suggested incorporating spirituality within the university curriculum. She explained that adding spirituality to the curriculum throughout the university would require a clear idea of what needs to be taught and an alignment with the university's graduate

attributes. She asserted that the university is pushing diversity across the curriculum, and that spirituality would require a similar push to successfully incorporate it within the university. Toby and Uri, in contrast, were of the opinion that incorporating spirituality within the curriculum, because of another teaching policy document at the university, would just be an addition in the curriculum and nothing else. William found the idea of building a curriculum with spirituality daunting. He stated,

I wouldn't even know where to start. [...] We have to know why we're doing it and what's the outcome for the student doing this? [...] You can't just do it for the sake of being a good thing to do, in the current tertiary education, where it's: what's the graduate attributes, what is the learning outcome, how was it taught and what you were assessing ... there's got to be a clear link between all those things. And if it is not a clear link, you won't get past your quality control.

5.9.2 A Unit on Spirituality

Quincy, Shelley, Reese, Toby, Val, William, and Zoey discussed the scope of a unit on spirituality. Toby and Val explained that unit outlines (which give information about units/subjects to students) at the University of Tasmania are written agreements between the university and the students, that state the expectations of both parties, and, as such, need to be transparent. Quincy explained that she would develop a unit on spirituality without using the term directly. He explained, "I would indirectly talk about the graduate student attributes that talk about providing students with global awareness, a sense of social responsibility, building ethical decision-making practices, those sorts of things. It's all covered in there." He further

elaborated that these were more generalised terminologies that he would use without getting “into the nitty-gritty” of what he “considered to be spirituality.”

Discussing the scope of a unit on spirituality within TSBE, Toby felt that it would be limited, as it would be another topic in a list of obligatory requirements, to be checked off in a tick-box, without necessarily being given appropriate coverage. Toby added that building a unit on spirituality would require decisions on a definition of spirituality, the expected learning outcomes, and the assessment of those outcomes. He gave an example of a section in a unit, “Giving Voice to Values” that was being taught in his faculty, which he believed had learning outcomes which could be similar to those in a unit on spirituality.

Shelley suggested that a unit on “spirituality, ethics, and spirituality in business” could fit well in TSBE, with a primary focus on spirituality instead of ethics. She asserted that ethics, in terms of the curriculum, could be taught by discussing the norms that everyone’s willing to follow, while spirituality would focus on what individuals believe in, which in itself is a very personal issue. She explained, “I think people should be given the opportunity in any curriculum to investigate the really deep questions about life, about its meaningfulness, about why they are in the business of living, and what it is that they hope for.”

Reese was of the opinion that a unit on spirituality or workplace spirituality might be interesting, but it would need to be attractive enough for large student enrolments. She believed that an academic interested in preparing a unit outline, and teaching that unit, could do the job well, and there was room within the current curriculum to bring it in. She would like to open up the prospect of teaching spirituality throughout the university, but felt that it would need to be done gradually, as academics might object to it initially.

Instead of building a unit on spirituality, Toby was of the opinion that students develop values that contribute to their spiritual lives by interacting with academics, rather than being taught the topic directly. He explained that “dealing with students, being consistent, transparent, all of those things are important.” He added that, “if students [...] develop better sets of values, they get to examine their own values, and to be able to enunciate them better and live them, I think that contributes to their spiritual life.” Toby asserted that “a campus that has a more strongly defined spiritual life is a more inclusive, inviting, and successful campus”, and thus does not require a unit on spirituality per se.

5.9.3 Integrate Spirituality into the Whole Curriculum

Reese, Shelley, Toby, William, Xavier, and Zoey were of the opinion that spirituality should be integrated throughout all units that are being taught in TSBE. Toby initially felt that “the idea of implanting spirituality as a term in our unit outlines would be a difficult sell indeed. I don’t see how you could do it, and yet we can teach ethics and the concept of “giving voice to values,” a concept embedded within another unit on ethics in TSBE. He contradicted himself, however, by noting that spirituality could be added in response to the moral requirements of society and could be integrated in the curriculum in various ways. He suggested adding “wellness in organisations” as a concept that could be integrated without using the word spirituality. He added, “A greater spiritual awareness, a greater improvement in your moral compass, more of a better understanding of your personal morality in terms of the values that you hold. That would make sense.”

Shelley explained that the TSBE had no official curriculum that addresses the concept of spirituality, and, because of this, academics bring their own spirituality

into their classrooms. She was of the opinion that “if you do it in the stand-alone unit, then it becomes hermetically sealed from everything else, and that is the unit you do.” She elaborated that integrating a concept like spirituality across the curriculum would enable students to have wider perspectives of the concept. She felt that spirituality should be a standalone unit as well as integrated within all the units in a course, within the business curriculum. On a similar note, Xavier also advocated embedding spirituality into the curriculum, and felt that spirituality as a standalone unit would make the concept irrelevant.

I believe that spirituality should just be embedded throughout the curriculum. It should just be there, it should be an inherent part as in the *Melbourne Declaration*. It should be an inherent part of all that we teach; it should just be suffused. You can’t isolate it out, and stick it in a little box, called a sub-unit of a unit.

William, on the other hand, was critical of integrating spirituality in the curriculum. He was of the opinion that the same thing was done with ethics, with ethics integrated into all units within the business curriculum. As a result, he felt some academics just covered ethics for the sake of it. He felt that, in theory, having an integrated curriculum with spirituality sounds good, but its practical implementation is very difficult. The main reason for this is that all academics may not be on board to teach such an important concept, and just move quickly to the next thing that may be important to them.

5.9.4 Positive Impact on Students

Reese, Uri, William, Xavier, and Zoey were of the opinion that adding spirituality to the curriculum could have a positive impact on students. They felt that

it may improve students' reasoning abilities, but were not sure whether it would impact their behaviour, or merely create awareness of the concept. Zoey believed that adding spirituality to the curriculum could enhance business education, by providing practical experiences to help students learn about themselves, their life goals, and the world.

Xavier explained that the structure of a curriculum with spirituality, and the things it addresses, will demonstrate whether it will have an impact on students. It has to be flexible enough to open students' minds to possibilities rather than close them. "If you make a decision, you are closing down possibilities, if you make an incision, you are opening up possibilities. If you are incisive, you open up possibilities, so you need to be inscriptive and not descriptive or prescriptive." Xavier felt that spirituality in the business curriculum would allow students to be open to possibilities, providing them with positive learning experiences.

5.9.5 Assessment

Val and William were more interested in what would be assessed and how the assessment rubric would be written for a unit on spirituality, while Reese believed that there was no need of assessment for a unit in spirituality.

William believed that assessing students' learning was at the core of all teaching activities. He was concerned about the assessment tasks and the evidence that students could provide for their learning, as spirituality is very subjective in nature. He also felt that academics teaching a unit on spirituality would find it challenging to assess or measure students' spirituality, or their understanding of it. Val stated that even in regular units, students need a clear understanding of the assessment criteria and it would be even more challenging when assessing spirituality.

She asserted that assessment criteria need to be written down very clearly to avoid any confusion with the assessment tasks.

Reese advocated not having assessments for a unit on spirituality, as she felt that thirteen weeks were sufficient for students to realise that “spirituality can exist outside a religious institution.” She stated that there are some units at the university which are not assessed and students receive credits towards their higher education degree. Reese felt that a unit on spirituality should not be assessed, but given credit. This would enable students to look at their own spirituality which may help them become well-rounded professionals.

5.9.6 No Teaching of Spirituality

Of the ten participants, only one, Yann, was of the opinion that spirituality should not be taught in higher education. The reason he gave is that students come from varied backgrounds, and have different ethical and religious perspectives. He felt that this diversity would cause issues, especially in the unit that he was teaching. His unit focused on different dilemmas employees could face, which addressed them using various approaches that may not be acceptable by all. He explained, “So, all I can do is give students opportunities to practice dealing with discomfort and that would happen in class and with exercises, and to mix that up so that they don’t hate it.” He added that he had to use a prescribed book that had certain laws that needed to be followed to the letter, and as such could not deviate by teaching spirituality in any way. He strongly believed that if he taught spirituality in his unit, he would get fired as it would be against the policies of the university and what he teaches. However, he later on added that spirituality could be taught but without any underpinning of religion, and to him that was not possible, especially in his unit.

5.10 Comparing FoE and TSBE

Table 5.6 reveals that most academics in both faculties were of the opinion that a curriculum with spirituality—whether a stand-alone unit or integrated within the curriculum—could be beneficial for students. However, participants from both faculties expressed a need for research into the scope of including spirituality, and the concepts associated with it, within the university curriculum, before doing so.

More participants in TSBE than in FoE believed that there was some scope of a stand-alone unit on spirituality within their faculty, while some were also in favour of integrating spirituality across the curriculum. Most participants in both faculties believed that having spirituality within the curriculum could have a positive impact on students. Some participants in TSBE and only one from FoE discussed issues associated with assessment criteria for a curriculum with spirituality.

Table 5.6

FoE and TSBE Academics' viewpoints about incorporating spirituality within the curriculum

Subthemes	FoE	TSBE	Total
Spirituality and the curriculum	7	9	16
Scope for a unit on spirituality	6	5	11
Positive impact on students	6	5	11
Integrate spirituality into the whole curriculum	1	5	6
Assessments	1	5	6
No teaching spirituality	2	1	3

5.11 Discussion on Academics' Viewpoints on a Curriculum with Spirituality

Most academics in FoE and TSBE were divided about whether or not to include the concept of spirituality within their respective curricula. Most participants in FoE who were in favour of including spirituality in teacher education stated that the concept was already present in some form within the health and physical education unit. One participant suggested that spirituality should be made mandatory in pre-service teacher education as it will enable teachers have a wider understanding of the diverse students they would encounter when they start teaching. According to Rogers and Hill (2002) most states in Australia have started accepting spirituality as an important aspect of school education, but there is insufficient evidence that teachers are incorporating the concept successfully in their teaching. Perhaps the reason for this is the insufficient “practical application” (p. 49) in pre-service teacher education about managing multicultural and diverse students, resulting in a lack of understanding on the spiritual dimension of students (Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2014)

Academics in TSBE also felt that there was a possibility of incorporating spirituality within the business school's curriculum, as units or across the board. Nonetheless, some were concerned that integrating spirituality throughout the curriculum could diminish its impact as academics would treat it as another mandatory topic that needs to be covered in the curriculum. Miller and Drake (1997, p. 239) assert that “educators avoid the word ‘spiritual.’ It makes them uncomfortable.” Most academics in higher education perceive spirituality as “taboo” because of the separation of personal and professional lives within educational

settings (Crossman, 2003). Sharma and Arbuckle (2010) argue that a curriculum with spirituality has to be holistic and integrated across the board, and not fragmented into units. Integrating spirituality into higher education would require academics to address student's "spiritual aspects" alongside the mind and body (Taplin, 2014, p. 15), which could be challenging for some academics who may not be expert in the topic.

Most participants in TSBE discussed the scope of having a unit on spirituality within their faculty, while few participants in FoE discussed it. All the participants were of the opinion that a unit with spirituality would need to be broad in scope and all inclusive. They asserted that such a unit would also need to have a clear definition of spirituality with specific learning outcomes, with some advocating the need to develop appropriate tools to measure those learning outcomes. This is in consensus with Sharma and Arbuckle (2010) who opine that developing a curriculum with spirituality in higher education would have to go "through a process of dialogue, reflection, analysis, exploration and testing out in process" (p. 454). This would require understanding the nature of spirituality, developing curriculum priorities, ascertaining knowledge that could be provided, and identifying learning outcomes, which may be more challenging compared with other units taught at the university, because of the subjective nature of spirituality (Flanagan, 2011).

Contradicting himself, one academic in TSBE was unwilling to officially add spirituality into the curriculum, but he believed that a unit on spirituality would be beneficial for students. He felt that a unit on spirituality would tap into students' intrinsic potential by allowing them to explore their inherent abilities to develop them into professionals that are productive members of the society. Baha'i International Community (2010) suggests that these abilities include having a sense of awareness

of oneself and the surroundings, and working with a spirit of service in collaboration with others for a sustainable transformation of society. Similarly, most participants in both faculties also stated that they would prefer teaching the concept of spirituality without writing it down in the curriculum. Harris and Crossman (2005) explain that teachers connected with their own spirituality are able to teach spirituality more effectively by interacting and building learning relationships, even when it is not part of the mainstream curriculum. It seems that irrespective of the presence of spirituality as a concept with the curriculum, students' spirituality may be developed through meaningful relationships within higher education.

Some participants also felt that instead of teaching spirituality as a concept, they would like to help students develop their spirituality through tacit learning, or the hidden curriculum; others stated that they would teach concepts associated with spirituality such as moral compass, values, and spiritual wellbeing. Fisher (2012) believes that spirituality enables people to gain meaning, purpose, and values, and enables them to transform themselves through learning and development. He also suggests that the mainstream curriculum in higher education requires a focus on incorporating spirituality. Incorporating spirituality within higher education would require academics to revisit their curricula, and identify areas where spirituality could be incorporated, implicitly or explicitly (Harris & Crossman, 2005). This raises the question of how academics perceive the teaching of spirituality without adding it to the curriculum and how it could benefit students to develop as professionals. Another question that arises is that would teaching spirituality lead to proselytising one specific view of spirituality?

Two participants in FoE and one in TSBE stated that they did not want to teach spirituality. Nine other participants were also sceptical, because they believed in

the separation of church and state, but they did not oppose adding spirituality to the curriculum. King (2007) maintains that pessimistic people may display their religion and spirituality, but believe that both should be kept separate. He asserts that adding spirituality to the curriculum would require academics to make choices about the content and teaching, which could push boundaries for some, who believe that “beliefs, traditions and meaning” (King, 2007, p.109) should be kept separate from education.

Interestingly, one academic in FoE reflected on having a unit on “spirituality and religion” for pre-service teachers, who would like to teach in religious schools. He was unsure whether his faculty would support teaching this unit. According to Hughes (2012), approximately one-third of all students in Australia, irrespective of their backgrounds, go to Christian schools, and the number is growing. This requires teacher education to focus on training teachers to be able to manage the diversity within students and cater to their needs (Grajczonek, 2010).

Some participants in TSBE linked the university’s graduate attributes with spirituality because of their similar nature. Graduate attributes are the skills, values, and attributes expected of graduates (Readman, 2011). At the University of Tasmania, the graduate attributes are listed in a Graduate Quality Statement (University of Tasmania, 2014), which addresses the development of competencies and skills that would enable graduates to be knowledgeable, inspired, and successful professionals who function well within the global context. Some concepts like ethics, sustainability (Bouckaert, 2015), values (Livingstone, 2014), connectedness (De Souza, 2016), diversity (Hodge, 2014), integrity, and social responsibility (Vasconcelos, 2015), are concepts associated with spirituality. While the university itself may not ascribe to or even consider using the term spirituality, it seems to be addressing related issues by

aspiring to develop attributes associated with spirituality for personal and professional benefit.

Five academics in TSBE questioned the possible assessment of spirituality within the higher education, and only one in FoE discussed this. They asserted that the subjective nature of spirituality makes it challenging to assess students' learning, especially as the learning outcomes may not be as clearly stated as in other units. Hodge (2001) explains that the best approach to assess spirituality has to be qualitative in nature, holistic, and open to students' individual perception and interpretation of their understanding of spirituality. While numerous studies have been conducted to measure people's spirituality, for example, Astin, Astin, and Lindholm (2011), Bryant (2003), Fisher, (2009b), no specific methodology has yet been determined to identify students' learning of spirituality as a concept in higher education or determining their own development of spirituality individually.

One participant in TSBE believed that students do not need assessable tasks but could be given individual assignments that they need to complete without giving them a mark, as in some other units at the university. According to Nelms (2008), this would require a practical approach towards addressing the spiritual issues that students may have, which is very similar to the approach used by some educators. This type of assessment also depends on students' viewpoints of spirituality, which could be faith based or secular (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2011) and need to be acknowledged.

McSherry (2000) suggests that a class group for the teaching of spirituality should consist of ten to fifteen students. Alternatively, he suggests teaching the group in a workshop format, assessing them on their exploration and understanding of spirituality and the concepts associated with it, through essays or case studies. Higher

education has large cohorts of students and teaching and assessing individual students for their “personal growth and spiritual awareness,” within a limited time frame, would be time consuming and challenging (McSherry, 2000, p .44). Bush (1999) suggests the use of a reflective journal, which can be used to assess students’ growth and development.

Most participants in FoE and TSBE supported the inclusion of spirituality within their respective faculties, and some discussed its incorporation within the whole university. Lindholm and Astin (2008), and Welch and Koth (2013) explain that including spirituality in the curriculum would help students to learn about moral principles that are conducive to community building, enabling people to live together in harmony. Rubin (2017) believes that what was a locally-based society has transformed to be global, and professionals must be prepared to engage with people from different backgrounds. Workplaces seek to employ professionals who can connect with others and provide individual support to employees and society (Groen, 2009). To cater to these requirements, universities need to redesign their curricula, and have open discourses around the concept of spirituality (Natsis, 2016), and discuss with academics, students, and individuals about how to connect the learner, the curriculum, and society (Groen, 2009).

5.12 Theme 3: Concepts Associated With Spirituality

Because of the sensitive nature of spirituality, some academics in FoE and TSBE also discussed the possibilities of teaching concepts they believed were associated with spirituality, rather than teaching it directly. Participants from both faculties suggested some concepts that were similar in nature and could be taught in both faculties, while some were very specific to their respective faculties. Tables 5.7

and 5.8 show the data according to each faculty, while Table 5.9 demonstrates the combined data.

5.13 Faculty of Education (FoE)

Table 5.7 demonstrates that all academics in FoE believed that they could teach various concepts associated with spirituality without using the word itself. Three participants suggested teaching spirituality within “religious contexts”, two felt that an overview of the commonalities and difference of all religious practices and their interpretation of spirituality should be included. One academic felt that there is potential to teach religious spirituality in pre-service teacher education, for teachers who want to teach in religion-based schools. Two academics discussed the importance of cultural spirituality as a concept that could be taught with the underpinning of diversity, to cater to the growing diversity of students’ backgrounds and beliefs, and create awareness amongst students towards others. Four academics viewed the inclusion of spirituality and decision-making as important concepts that could be taught to pre-service teachers who constantly need to make decisions that could influence their students’ ethical, moral, and spiritual development. Four participants advocated the teaching of “spiritual wellbeing”, suggesting it is important and already in place in teacher education, while two participants were of the opinion that teaching spirituality indirectly through “outdoor education” with Zen and meditative practices may be beneficial.

Some of the participants said that spirituality is non-cognitive, unrelated to the intellect, and, being unmeasurable, cannot be taught as an assessable topic. They felt that spirituality could be taught using concepts that are more concrete and measurable, like spiritual wellbeing, which are already being taught in teacher education.

Table 5.7

FoE Academics' viewpoints of teachable concepts associated with spirituality

Subthemes	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Many concepts associated with spirituality	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Spirituality and religion		x			x			x	
Spirituality and diversity					x		x		
Spirituality and decision-making	x		x	x	x				
Spiritual wellbeing	x		x	x					x
Outdoor education						x		x	

Description of the Data

5.13.1 Many Concepts are Associated with Spirituality

All participants in FoE were of the opinion that teaching spirituality as a standalone unit would be challenging. They thought that a better option would be to teach different topics associated with spirituality. Danny taught a number of concepts associated with spirituality, within a specific unit that included spiritual wellbeing. He talked about Australian values that he taught in his unit. He explained,

In one of the units I teach, we go through those [Australian values] with our students and we talk about how they can differ depending on people's backgrounds, beliefs and all of those kinds of stuff. I think spirituality, morals, values, and ethics can be incorporated in everything that you do within a classroom.

Hayden had domestic [Australian] and international students in his unit, making a diverse cohort. He avoided discussing religion with them, saying, "We talk about some of those other value systems, like openness, trust, respect, support, but not about a religion, so do we talk about spirituality in those terms." Hayden also tried to

model these values to enable his students to develop a “willingness to look at things in different perspectives”.

Grace, Hayden, and Ellen discussed various concepts associated with spirituality that were already being taught to the pre-service teachers, who then take these concepts with them to their schools. Grace had taught her students about “developing the inner person, the soul, the light in the student, and the actualization of the spiritual nature of the child as an entity,” and stressed that, “education is what we use to actually enhance that potential of that individual being.”

Ellen discussed teaching concepts associated with spirituality such as “sustainability,” “caring for society,” “caring for others,” and ethical decision making, which are about “doing good”, and which belong to the “cluster of dimensions, which is spirituality, religiosity and ethics.” She added that concepts like “peace studies,” “multi-culturalism,” and “social justice” are also associated with spirituality. She asserted, “The Australian identity almost has a slight spirituality aspect to it, and that ties it with the values, [...] and spirituality issues are re-directed and reflected through the arts, music, and dance.” She added that counselling can be used to enable students to identify themselves as individuals and help them connect with their own spirituality without addressing religion.

Hayden reflected on his experience in teaching concepts associated with spirituality:

We would try and provide an experience that provides some understanding of global engagement, cross-cultural understanding for all of our students. It would be much more a sociological or social psychological rather than a religious or spiritual approach, mainly because of the challenges of trying to do it.

5.13.2 Spirituality and Religion

Ellen and Hayden talked about the inclusion of religious education and explained that, in the past, religious education was part of the curriculum and there was indoctrination of students. Ellen explained,

The Australian constitution talks about the fact that we don't have an established religion in Australia and historically in our school system, we did religious instruction, and that's been decreasing over the years. If parents want to get the children to become more aware religiously, they often choose to send their child to a particular denomination of school, even though the majority of the people [who] would probably send their children to [such a] school, never go to church themselves; because they're linking on to the issue that the church schools may in fact have better resources or better social capital.

She was of the opinion that religious education should be brought back into teacher education, with a focus on all religions and not just Christianity, so that teachers are aware of the different issues surrounding their students' religious or spiritual identities. Bailey felt that teaching "spirituality and religion" for a specific cohort, that wants to teach in schools with a particular religious denomination, is a possibility, but the current curriculum may not be able to cater to it.

Grace experienced teaching spirituality at a Quaker school, and felt she did not experience any kind of indoctrination. She expressed, "There was something special, something different about it," and felt that this kind of religious spirituality—incorporating aspects of Quaker philosophy—could be taught in higher education.

5.13.3 Spirituality and Diversity

Only two participants in FoE also taught about diversity within their classrooms and believed that it was a concept associated with spirituality. They felt that “spirituality and diversity” could be taught as a separate unit. Ivan explained that students in teacher education come from different backgrounds, cultures, belief systems, upbringing, and socio-economic statuses. Academics teaching a diverse cohort need to be open-minded about addressing issues arising from such cohorts. They need to prepare their pre-service teachers to be able to cope with this kind of diversity within the schools they would work in.

Ellen and Grace believed that teaching diversity in teacher education is important because of the diverse student population. Both were of the opinion that teachers need to be aware of the cultural norms of the students coming to class, especially around issues that may be offensive in certain cultures. Ellen gave the example of how touching a child’s head may be offensive to a child who practices Buddhism, because, for him, Buddha resides there. She explained that a teacher must be aware of these because, “you often find that you’re not sure that from one perspective, this is spirituality, or is it superstition? One person’s superstition is someone’s spirituality.”

Grace stated that, “If we really are educators, we should be opening up the capacity of kids to wider possibilities in changing lives.” She explained this by sharing an activity she performed while teaching at a school, a few years ago, that enabled teachers and students to explore the diversity of the same activity happening in two different cultures. She and her colleague demonstrated how a western tea party differs from an eastern tea party, and the cultural meaning associated with those

activities. She believed that these kinds of activities are associated with “spirituality and diversity” and could be adapted in teacher education.

5.13.4 Spirituality and Decision-making

Almost all participants talked about the importance of teaching students to make ethical and value-based decisions in varying contexts. These academics felt that their pre-service teachers are taught to make responsible decisions to have some influence on the society. Their students studied different theories about decision-making and were presented with practical school situations, where they had to make responsible decisions. Alex, Carol, Danny, and Ellen had been teaching decision-making to their students and felt it had a spiritual base to it.

Alex felt that his spirituality helped him make appropriate decisions all his life and felt that his students should be able to use their spirituality to make decisions. He helped his students understand the complexities involved in decision-making by providing them with different scenarios in school situations and getting them to imagine having a decision-making role, such as a principal. He explained he wanted his students to take responsibility for their decisions by reflecting on the consequences of those decisions without blaming others. He added,

What I tried to do is, not just give them an understanding about the theory, but of how the theory informs the practice, and in some cases, how the theory doesn't inform the practice and how practice is more complex and that they have that responsibility for making those decisions.

Danny also taught decision-making by providing examples to students that may be controversial, and encouraged them to think about what would be the right

thing to do. He explained, “We educate the students that they have a responsibility to report certain things in a school situation; [...] they don’t have a choice about whether they do or don’t report it.” He provided an example,

Let’s take confidentiality and someone who has suicidal tendencies. I don’t know whether it is good example or not, but there is a divide about whether you should maintain someone’s confidentiality, or whether you need to report the behaviour, in order for that person to receive assistance.

Danny asserted that this helped students think at a broader level to make decisions in whatever is the right thing to do. He felt that this approach was spiritual.

Carol’s focus in terms of decision-making was on the notion of respecting everyone, which might be associated with spirituality in some ways. She explained, “My task in respecting my students is to help them to develop the capacity to decide how to act, how to live, and which values to embrace.”

Ellen presented a different viewpoint on decision-making; a view which she believed is taking root within society and education. She was of the opinion that the concept of ethical decision-making has been taken from religious and spiritual texts. She explained,

In some ways, it is that notion of what is the doctrine of doing good, which is one of the main doctrines of the core where they come from, a Judaeo-Christian background. [...] There's a ‘religional’ ethics and there’s ethical decision- making, which is very strong certainly in the Jewish, Christian and Muslim religions. [...] We see that being manifest itself a lot [within Australia], and the notion of social justice and ethical decision-making is becoming very strong across education,

and even across society, but they [the Australian curriculum] don't necessarily link those to religious beliefs.

5.13.5 Spiritual Wellbeing

Ivan and Danny were teaching a unit on Health and Physical Education (H&PE), which addresses the four different domains of health, including spiritual health. Bailey felt that this concept needed more focus, mainly because an individual's spiritual, emotional, and social health determines his or her academic success or failure, which impacts society at large. He further explained,

At the end of the day, even if you're academically successful, when you're miserable, don't know who you are, don't feel like you are connected in your relationship with God, you're going to be ... it's not worth anything. [...] But at the other end, succeeding academically and having high employment prospects [...] is a means to another end, which is not just that the individual is well spiritually, socially, and emotionally, but that the community is well, spiritually, socially, and emotionally.”

5.13.6 Outdoor Education

Hayden and Fran discussed outdoor education as a concept associated with spirituality. Hayden said that when he was younger, he taught outdoor education within the context of personal health and wellbeing, but noted it could also be taught as spirituality. Fran, who was teaching outdoor education, felt that some of her students “loved” the unit while others found it “confronting.” She said that, “In outdoor education, when I draw attention to place, they might feel a connection; they might use the language around feeling.” Talking about creating awareness of place,

she added, “I think from that stems, potentially for them, a spiritual connection to that place, or a shift from outsider to insider, which is then, I think for me, sort of spirit.”

5.14 Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE)

All academics from TSBE were of the opinion that instead of teaching spirituality directly as a concept, teaching other concepts related to it would be better for students. Table 5.8 demonstrates the different ideas discussed by these academics. Three participants were of the opinion that they could have a unit on “spirituality and religion” within their programs, by teaching about different religions and spirituality. Three other participants talked about the concept of “spirituality and diversity” to help students learn about different spiritual beliefs and practices and foster diversity. Six participants discussed the concept of leadership and decision-making interchangeably, explaining that ethical leadership requires decision-making that is beneficial for all concerned, and so “spirituality and leadership” could be a good option to teach. One participant had been specifically teaching “servant leadership” and considered the concept to be spiritual in nature and felt that more units should teach this concept. Two participants discussed “spirituality and accounting”, where one was in favour and the other was against teaching the concept. Only one participant was of the opinion that spirituality could be used to counsel students to help develop their inherent potential.

Table 5.8

TSBE Academics' viewpoints of teachable concepts associated with spirituality

Subthemes	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Many concepts associated with spirituality	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Spirituality and religion			x	x		x				
Spirituality and diversity		x					x	x		
Leadership and decision-making	x	x		x	x	x		x		
Spirituality and accounting					x				x	
Spirituality and counselling		x								

Description of the Data

5.14.1 Many Concepts Associated with Spirituality

All participants in TSBE said that instead of adding spirituality directly into the curriculum, concepts associated with it would be easier to teach. Toby explained,

We put ethics into post-grad now as a core unit in the MBA, mainly because it's the old argument to it; a bit of truth in that the global financial crisis was driven by Harvard MBAs, who had very interesting wobbly moral compasses when they got into businesses.

He added that teaching the concept of “giving voice to values” in the ethics unit could develop students' spirituality and help them deal with different situations. He added that a faculty of education in one university in Australia was offering a unit on spirituality called “Spirituality, Wisdom and Aesthetics,” which could be made into a “specialised elective” unit in the MBA program. He added that another unit “Magic, Spirituality and Religion” offered at the University of Tasmania, within College of Arts and Law, School of Social Sciences, would not be feasible to teach in TSBE, but did not explain why.

Val felt that enabling students to “analyse” and seek the truth is like helping them build their spirituality, which helps them see “the beauty of fascination” and is part of teaching spirituality. Xavier did not believe in teaching spirituality as a concept directly, as it could stop student from developing into who they want to be. He explained that students come with their own views on spirituality, and teaching them directly would mean developing a definition of spirituality, which they may not agree with and so they may become inhibited. He asserted that a “spirituality unit” cannot have specific learning outcomes, as required by units in the university. He said that talking about writing down the learning outcomes for spirituality “stops it, concretises it, and it ossifies it. It stops it being emergent, it stops it flourishing. If you write it down, you kill it [spirituality].”

William was unsure whether to teach spirituality directly or to teach concepts associated with it. He explained that spirituality could mean anything irrational, such as being good or applying the *Golden Rule*. He added that graduate attributes could be viewed with a spirituality angle, which could

be taught in a dedicated way early, so that it [spirituality] can provide a way into everything else they do. So, when they get to financial accounting, they’ve got the lens to say, when I am reading this text, I am seeing it through the lens of the spirituality stuff that I learned a year ago.

5.14.2 Spirituality and Religion

Reese and Shelley talked about the need for a unit on “religion and spirituality” within the university. Reese believed that to “produce good employable people in the future, you need to have a religious component or spirituality” in the

curriculum. She explained that this would help students learn about topics such as “principles of moral decisions” by thinking about sensitive subjects that are affected by religious beliefs such as “euthanasia” or “abortion.” She asserted that these would allow students to explore new ideas, or develop a standpoint that they can carry with them.

Shelley stated that her teaching was underpinned by her Christian spirituality and religion, but she never preached her faith in the different units she taught. Nevertheless, in one of her classes she generally introduces worldviews that are spiritual or religious, followed by philosophies like “Kantianism” and “utilitarianism”, leading to an introduction to the major faiths of the world. She was thinking of adding the Baha’i Faith in her unit, as she feels it is similar to other major religions.

5.14.3 Spirituality and Diversity

Reese, William, and Xavier talked about diversity as a concept associated with spirituality. Reese, raised in a multicultural and diverse religious environment, felt that spirituality and diversity went hand in hand. She said that, while teaching about diversity in class, she also adds “a spiritual component to it, as I get the students from the university who may come for all over the world, just allows space for people to either explore or talk about it [spirituality and diversity].” Reese was of the opinion that the concept of “spirituality and diversity” should be taught in higher education. She explained that such a unit should teach the commonalities within religious and secular spiritual values, and be flexible enough to enable students to work with each other cooperatively.

5.14.4 Spirituality, Leadership and Decision-making

William, Uri, Yann, and Reese said that leadership and decision-making could be taught as concepts relating to spirituality. Uri discussed various leadership types, and specifically taught “servant leadership” as a concept associated with spirituality. He explained,

That to me is a spiritual element. Servant leadership is something that Jesus talked about, but, to me, it also means one is humble; one does the task and therefore knows what other people have to do to do that task. Servant leadership is that ability, not only to know I’m doing the lowest level job as a servant leader, but I also know what that job means to be good at.

Uri further explained that there is a lack of hierarchy in servant leadership and peers are expected to work together with humility, which is a strength and not a weakness, and very spiritual. He believes that servant leadership is the ultimate form of leadership, which touches upon the heart of a leader, and develops according to an individual’s spirituality.

Quinn, William, and Uri felt that they may not teach spirituality directly, but are approaching it subtly by teaching their students to make informed decisions. Quinn stated that he could teach “principles of ethical leadership” and enable students to have “a sense of social responsibility, and ethical decision-making,” which he felt were touching upon aspects of spirituality.

5.14.5 Spirituality and Accounting

Yann and Uri discussed the teaching of spirituality and accounting. Yann was of the opinion that accounting is “black and white,” and he teaches his students to

follow a code of ethics for professional accountants, which may be different from their personal beliefs. He believed that spirituality had no place in accounting.

In contrast, Uri would like to teach “accounting and spirituality” within his unit on accounting, as he believes that accounting is not black and white, as it helps people make decisions based on data. Talking about teaching accounting and spirituality, and the challenges around it, he said, “I would love to have it [spirituality]. I see the potential and I would love to be able to implement it.” He reflected on how he could design a unit in accounting that would enable students to interpret the numerical data qualitatively, and find the appropriate theories that could be applicable to teach “spirituality and accounting.” He felt that he would need to help his students understand the importance of the concept and how it could influence “the organisation, individual members and, maybe, society at large.”

5.14.6 Spirituality and Counselling

Reese recommended offering “spirituality and counselling” as a unit within the university. She discussed how she used her own spirituality to counsel students especially when they were in emotional or challenging situations. She would have one-on-one conversations with her students about spirituality, and gently engage them with the topic. She also informed her students that she would pray for them, for which some were grateful, while others sought more information. She felt that this enabled them to discuss various aspects of spirituality, while working through their issues. She asserted a course on spirituality and counselling could help students manage themselves and their work more “efficiently”.

5.15 Comparing FoE and TSBE

Table 5.9 demonstrates that all nineteen participants were of the opinion that the different concepts associated with spirituality have the potential to be included within their programs and taught in higher education. Some concepts were already in place within the curricula of the two faculties, while some were imparted tacitly, such as enabling students to explore who they are without talking about spirituality. As these academics shared their teaching experiences, they identified some of the concepts already in place within their curricula, and pondered on their association with spirituality. As it is a non-cognitive concept, academics in FoE were of the opinion that teaching spirituality requires great care.

Some participants in both faculties advocated teaching spirituality within religious contexts, while others talked about concepts of spirituality and diversity, and spirituality and decision-making. Academics in FoE suggested awareness, spiritual wellbeing, and outdoor education as areas where concepts of spirituality might be developed, while TSBE recommended teaching the concepts of leadership and counselling through spirituality. These suggestions disclose the similarities and differences in the way participants perceived teaching concepts associated with spirituality given the natures of their respective faculties.

Table 5.9

FoE and TSBE Academics' viewpoints of teachable concepts associated with spirituality

Subthemes	FoE	TSBE	Total
Many concepts associated with spirituality	9	10	19
Spirituality and religion	3	3	6
Spirituality and diversity	2	3	5
Leadership and decision-making	4	6	10
Spiritual wellbeing	4	0	4
Outdoor education	2	0	2
Spirituality and counselling	0	1	1

5.16 Discussion on Academics' Viewpoints of Concepts Associated with Spirituality

All participants from FoE and TSBE perceived that there were numerous concepts associated with spirituality that they were either already teaching or that could be taught within their respective faculties or the university more generally. However, some academics asserted that they did not teach, nor would they ever teach, any concept associated with spirituality.

Concepts that were already being taught within FoE included ethics, values, morals, openness, trust, respect, support, spiritual wellbeing, outdoor education, diversity, global engagement, and being a good teacher. Literature affirms that professions require spiritual values and virtues such as integrity, honesty, accountability, quality, cooperation, intuition, trustworthiness, respect, justice, service, piety, ethics, intellectual depth, detachment, lovingness, and mysticism (Grzeda & Assogbavi, 2011; McLaughlin, 2005; McLean, 1994). It appears that

despite some academics' viewpoints indicating that they do not believe they are teaching spirituality in any way, the data received contradicts it. For example, Carol, who claimed not to teach spirituality, teaches ethics and respect to her students, and enables them to develop the capacity to make decisions on living a value based life. As discussed in previous chapters, ethics, morals and values are concepts associated with spirituality (see 2.4.1).

Participants in TSBE suggested some concepts associated with spirituality that could be taught in business education. One of these concepts, "giving voice to values," was already being taught in the ethics unit in TSBE. Some academics in TSBE also suggested teaching analysis, spirituality and ethics, workplace spirituality, servant leadership, spirituality and accounting, and spirituality and counselling. The common concepts suggested in both faculties were spirituality and religion, spirituality and diversity, spirituality and leadership, and spirituality and decision-making. Academics suggested that these concepts could empower students to become well-rounded professionals.

A few academics in both faculties suggested teaching "spirituality and religion", and discussed the importance of religion in the development of students' spirituality. Some were of the opinion that the increasing diversity within student cohorts would require academics in FoE and TSBE to develop an understanding of various religious, spiritual, and cultural views. They asserted that this could help them create awareness amongst their students about the diverse cultural and religious norms and behaviours they would encounter within their professions. De Souza (2016) recommends that teacher training programs should introduce units that enable pre-service teachers to understand different worldviews and belief systems. These will help teachers to become more inclusive and manage the way their attitudes and

behaviours affect learning within a diverse classroom. Similarly, Magaldi-Dopman and Park-Taylor (2014) suggest that students in business education need to be equipped with a similar understanding of diversity that they would need to address within the workplace.

While one participant in TSBE was against teaching religious-based spirituality, he suggested teaching the basic concepts of all religions and belief systems, including atheism. The “Academy of Management, an organisation that promotes scholarly activities in management education, with its approval of the group, *Management, Spirituality, and Religion*, in 1999” (Manz et al., 2006, p. 106), signalled the importance and appropriateness of teaching religion and spirituality in management education. Marques et al. (2014) argue that there is a rising interest in spirituality within young people, mostly because of the diverse faiths found within society, and as such religion cannot be ignored any more within higher education in general. Fisher (2009b) and Natsis (2016) are of the opinion that while most universities in Australia are secular in nature, the growing diversity and interest in spirituality make it imperative to integrate spirituality in higher education.

Most participants in TSBE and some in FoE teach decision-making in varying contexts. Some talked about decision-making in terms of ethics, morals, and values, while others stated that their spirituality helped them make the right decisions. Some academics teach decision-making through activity-based learning, enabling students to understand the complexities involved in making the right decisions and being responsible for them. Some academics also believe the concept of doing the right thing, or doing good, originated from religion and is spiritual in nature, and could be taught as a concept associated with spirituality. Rego and Cunha (2008), Frohlich (2001), and Tisdell and Tolliver (2001) have the same opinion, asserting that the

development of ethically well-rounded professionals with wise decision-making skills requires incorporating spirituality and the values associated with it within higher education.

Most participants from TSBE viewed leadership and decision-making as concepts associated with spirituality that could be taught easily, and important to enable students to make well-informed decisions. King (2007) asserts that leaders' personal beliefs and spirituality underpin the decisions they make. This requires academics to be more aware of the framework of how spirituality, leadership, and decision-making work together before teaching spirituality in management (Pruzan, 2015). The concept of spiritual-based leadership has been developed by Pruzan (2015, p.169):

Spiritual-based leaders are nourished by their spirituality, which is a source within them that informs and guides them. They search for meaning, purpose and fulfilment in the external world of business and the internal world of consciousness and conscience. Their external actions and their internal reflections harmonise so that rationality and spirituality are mutually supportive.

Perhaps this definition could be used to teach spirituality, leadership, and decision-making, within TSBE, because of its focus on management and leadership in a number of units. Workplace spirituality as a concept emerged around the 1990s (Crossman, 2015) and has a strong focus on spiritual-based leadership (Pruzan, 2015).

One participant who teaches servant leadership advocated that it was related to spiritual leadership, where the leader works with others in humility. Schwepker and Schultz (2015) agree with this, stating that servant leaders use a unique style of leadership which focuses on leaders to serve others, including employees and team

mates, with integrity. However, Ciulla (2015) believes that developing ethical and effective leaders with spirituality is still a challenge within higher education.

Some participants in FoE associated spirituality with the concept of spiritual wellbeing, a relatively new concept that is being taught in teacher education in Health and Physical Education units by two participants. This was in response to the 2008 *Health and Physical Education Curriculum* (Department of Education Tasmania (DET), 2008) that requires schools to address numerous dimensions of health, including spiritual health. This document provides evidence of the importance placed by the government on school students' spirituality. Academics also viewed spiritual wellbeing in religious contexts, and asserted that it requires more focus on teachers, who also need to be physically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually healthy to perform their role as professionals effectively. Recent years have seen an increase on the emphasis on spiritual wellbeing (SWB) in education, especially through government documents like *The Melbourne Declaration 2008* (DEECD, 2009), *H&PE curriculum* (DET, 2008), and other academic literature.

There are both religious and secular viewpoints on SWB, and the curriculum in these documents can be interpreted in both ways. For example, a Christian view of SWB is explained by Muñoz-García and Aviles-Herrera (2013, p. 4) as “the affirmation of life in a relationship with God, self, community and environment that nurtures and celebrates wholeness.” A more common approach to SWB in education is described by Fisher (2009b), that involves an individual's relationship with the self, others, the environment and transcendence.

One participant in FoE discussed using outdoor education to teach spirituality and explained the way outdoor education develops pre-service teachers' spiritual connection to place and themselves. Another participant advocated that outdoor

education's past focus on physical health and wellbeing could be extended to teach spirituality. Given the fact that spirituality is an integral part of health and physical education in Tasmania, Lynch (2015) presents a definition of spirituality that is close to most academics' viewpoint who teach outdoor education. He defines it as "a sense of connection to phenomena and unusual events beyond self and usual sensory and rational existence; a sense of place within the universe" (Lynch, 2015, p. 203). This will enable students to feel a sense of awe, which Fischer (2011) says "is the root of spirituality" (p. 1174). Hill and Brown (2014) assert that one of the challenges for teachers today is enabling students to experience nature in a positive way and feel connected to it. The reason for this, they assert is, the "industrial model of education" (p. 221) where "the primary purpose of schools is to prepare people for a growing and changing workforce" (Hill & Brown, 2014, p. 221), rather than a focus on nature and connectedness to others.

While one participant in TSBE was against teaching spirituality in higher education, especially in accounting, he stated that spirituality could be taught as a utilitarian perspective of ethics, in light of doing greater good for others. Another participant in TSBE felt enthusiastic about teaching spirituality in his unit on accounting. Hertz and Friedman (2015) suggest that it is important to teach spirituality in business and accounting courses, because students are impressionable and can learn to develop themselves as meaningful business professionals, who "will strive to accomplish beyond the profit maximizing goal" (p. 17). Kernochan et al. (2007) state that, while including spirituality is still considered inappropriate in higher education, there seems to be "an implicit requirement for teaching spirituality in management education" (p. 62).

Only one participant in TSBE suggested teaching spirituality and counselling as a concept to students and academics. McLean (1994) explains that when spirituality was brought into academia, after the Second World War, it was used in the professional practices of psychologists, academics, and health care professionals, for counselling purposes. Teaching spirituality and counselling can enable students and academics to learn specific techniques to understand their inner selves and help others deal with issues (Curtis & Glass, 2002) that arise during their studies and workplaces.

All academics stated that they were satisfied with their diverse classes. Academics felt that they could see their students transform into more responsible individuals, and wondered whether they were already teaching spirituality in some ways. While this may be true, Marques et al. (2014) suggest that higher education needs a more systematic approach to spiritually-related concepts by including “purpose and meaning, values, and empathy” in its curricula.

5.17 Conclusion

This chapter addressed part of the second research question and presented the second topic, “Spirituality and the Higher Education Curriculum”, its three themes, and the subthemes associated with them that emerged from the data. Spirituality is a relatively new concept within education, but the growing number of publications since the second half of the twentieth century indicate its importance. This is further evidenced in government educational documents such as the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, (DEECD), 2009), Australian curriculum documents (ACARA, 2012, 2013, 2015), and *H&PE curriculum* by the Department of Education, Tasmania (2008), where aims and content associated with spiritual

wellbeing (SWB) and spirituality are included for young Australians. Despite the fact that the University of Tasmania has a unit on Health and Physical Education (H&PE), which addresses spiritual wellbeing, more focus seems to be required, as only those academics who had taught the unit seemed to be aware of teaching SWB. These documents signify that at least some importance is placed on SWB by government. The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQFC, 2013) does not use the word spirituality anywhere in its documents, yet concepts associated with spirituality are addressed.

Academics from the Faculty of Education and the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics supported the idea of including spirituality not only within their respective curricula, but also within the whole university. They viewed its inclusion as beneficial for students and academics, and suggested various ways to do this. Some participants suggested concepts or units that could be added within their curricula, while others suggested integrating spirituality within the university's curriculum across the board. Some academics also felt that instead of adding the concept directly into the curriculum, it should be suffused within their teaching without using the word itself, and focus on empowering students to be who they want to be, without feeling any pressure from the academics.

Some of the concepts associated with spirituality suggested by academics that could be taught within the two faculties are:

- “Spirituality and Religion,” that integrates many religious perspectives;
- “Spirituality and Diversity,” with a focus on cultural and religious diversity;

- “Spirituality and Decision-Making,” with a focus on making the right decisions for the benefit of all;
- “Spirituality, Leadership and Decision Making,” with a focus on leadership that can empathise with others and make decisions with greater care;
- “Servant Leadership,” with a focus on leaders who are more humble than other leaders and can inspire others through humility.

Despite the fact that spirituality in higher education is not fully accepted within academic circles, Tisdell (2008) asserts that there are numerous discourses happening around its incorporation in university curricula. Some universities around the world have already developed courses and units on spirituality (Harris & Crossman, 2005; Ng & Lu, 2015). One such unit was also identified within Australia, “Spirituality, Wisdom and Aesthetics,” which one academic viewed could be modified for an MBA program. Marques et al. (2014, p. 200) identified a unit in an MBA course at Stanford University’s Graduate School of Business called “The Business World: Moral and Spiritual Inquiry Through Literature”. Some universities have also integrated spirituality within their MBA courses on leadership, such as “Spirituality and Moral Leadership” (Groen, 2008, p. 193), “Spirituality and Leadership” (Harris & Crossman, 2005, p. 3) and “Workplace Spirituality” (Crossman, 2015, p.369). It remains to be seen to what extent universities will expand their curricula to make spirituality a greater focus, or whether they will be content to include the associated concepts, rather than the explicit study of spirituality. The support that academics have for such ideas is also likely to be strongly influential on their uptake in the higher education curriculum. Moreover, academics are likely to

have significant input into the way such units might be taught, and their views about useful pedagogical approaches and the potential impact of their teaching, are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 6

Teaching Spirituality

6.1 Introduction

This chapter continues to address the second research question, about teaching spirituality in the higher education curriculum. It discusses the pedagogical approaches academics believe would be most appropriate to teach the concept, and examines academics' perceptions on whether teaching could influence the development of their students' professional identities. The chapter concludes by examining the challenges that academics feel could arise with teaching spirituality in higher education. As seen in Figure 6.1, these three themes—"Pedagogical Approaches to Teach Spirituality," "Professional Identities through Spirituality," and "Challenges with Teaching Spirituality"—contribute to the larger topic "Teaching Spirituality". Unlike previous chapters, the subthemes from the first theme are presented in one consolidated table, demonstrating the data of both faculties together. The remaining two themes present their subthemes in tables by faculty, similar to the previous chapters. Both types of tables are followed by a detailed discussion of the data.

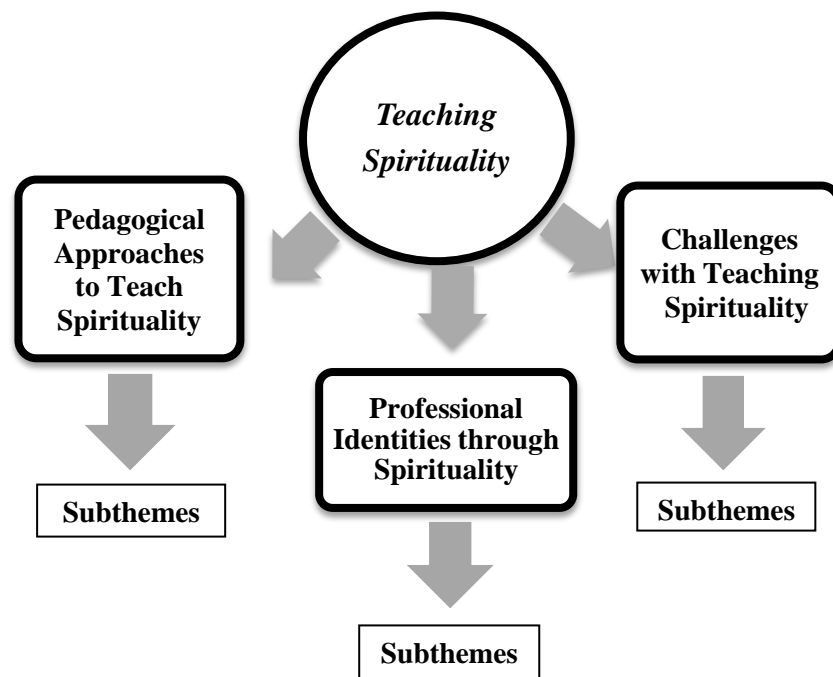


Figure 6.1. A diagrammatical representation of the themes associated with the third topic “Teaching Spirituality”

6.2 Theme 1: Pedagogical Approaches to Teaching Spirituality

Pedagogical approaches to teaching relate to the theories and practices of teaching and learning (Mercadal, 2016). Most academics in both faculties felt that the pedagogical approaches for teaching spirituality would have to be designed carefully, keeping in mind factors such as a safe environment, the academic’s role, and appropriate language. All the academics discussed the pedagogical approaches they used to teach other units, and indicated that they felt these could be applied to teach spirituality. As the pedagogical approaches to teaching spirituality discussed by the academics from FoE and TSBE were generic and similar, the data for this theme are presented in one table, Table 6.1 rather than by faculty, and discussed together for clarity and to avoid repetition.

6.3 Faculty of Education (FoE) and Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE)

As seen in Table 6.1, all academics in FoE and seven in TSBE asserted that personal beliefs, spirituality, and other factors influenced their pedagogical approaches to teaching any unit, and this would also apply to teaching spirituality. With the exception of one, all academics in FoE and seven in TSBE felt that they embodied their spirituality at all times, while three academics in TSBE did not feel that they embodied spirituality in any way. Five academics in FoE and four in TSBE discussed factors necessary to teach spirituality effectively, which included creating a safe environment for students to speak openly. Three academics from FoE discussed the need for an all-inclusive “language of spirituality” to help create awareness of spirituality amongst all students. Five academics from FoE and three from TSBE claimed to model certain behaviours and attitudes—such as being respectful—hoping that students would copy them, without teaching spirituality directly. Eight participants from FoE and seven from TSBE advocated teaching spirituality indirectly, but four from FoE and four from TSBE also felt that spirituality could be taught directly. All participants were of the opinion that teaching spirituality would require similar pedagogical approaches to what they use in their other units, with slight modifications. Most academics in both faculties felt that structured activities that include case studies, debates and discussions, reflective essays, storytelling, and individual exploration and experience could be very appropriate to use to teach the concept of spirituality, while others in FoE and TSBE felt that they were already teaching spirituality indirectly, through the hidden curriculum. Table 6.1 is followed by a detailed description of the data presented above.

Table 6.1

FoE and TSBE Academics' viewpoints on pedagogical approaches to teaching spirituality

Subthemes	FoE										TSBE										FoE	TSBE	Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I		Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z			
Influences on pedagogy	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x			x	x	x		x	9	7	16
Embodying spirituality	x			x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x		x		x	8	7	15
Teach people in a safe environment			x		x	x		x		x					x	x		x	x		5	4	9
Language of teaching spirituality	x	x					x														3	0	3
Teaching directly		x			x				x	x		x	x		x		x				4	4	8
Teaching indirectly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x			x	x	x	x	x		x	8	7	15
Different teaching methodologies																							
Discussions and debates	x				x	x			x		x	x	x				x				4	4	8
Reflective practice	x					x					x	x	x	x	x		x			x	2	7	9
Case studies					x						x	x	x		x	x	x				1	6	7
Storytelling	x				x				x		x	x									3	2	5
Individual exploration and experience	x	x			x			x	x	x	x	x						x		x	6	4	10

Description of the Data

6.3.1 Influences on Pedagogy

All participants in FoE and most in TSBE were of the opinion that their own spirituality or concepts associated with it influenced their pedagogical approaches. Bailey perceived that his spirituality affected every aspect of his life, which included his teaching approaches, and content selection for his units, but he tried not to influence his students with his personal beliefs. He said that he encouraged his students to study government policies, especially those relating to spirituality, to enable them to reflect on their own values and beliefs within educational contexts. This was in contrast to Danny and Ivan, who taught spiritual wellbeing in their units, who felt that their personal views came through their teaching. Ivan explained,

The hard thing when you're a teacher is to not put across your personal perspective as being the only way of doing things. So, when I try and teach it [spirituality], I try and say, *I* might do it this way, but that is because that is the way *I* live my life, and that is *my* belief system.

One of the factors that influenced Grace's pedagogical approaches to teaching involved treating her students as equals, and loving them; she would hug them if needed. She viewed the policy of not touching students as "an appalling social bankruptcy", that "is sending a message that human relationships don't matter." In contrast to Grace, Ellen did not "create a dependent relationship with her students", but allowed students to grow as people independently, and focused on value development, which she felt may be associated with spirituality.

Most participants from TSBE also explained the pedagogical approaches they use to teach in their classes. Val stated that, despite “being a lecturer”, she “did not like to lecture in class”, and so she sat amongst her students while teaching and encouraged them to connect with her respectfully. Reese also enabled her students to build their confidence by establishing boundaries in her first class, and then allowing her students to express themselves. Xavier explained that his pedagogical approach revolved around creating an awareness within his students that they would mimic what they learnt in class within their professional lives. He would encourage them to grow and develop as human beings, and practice their learning. He believed that his classrooms were safe “to flourish, to try, to fail, to succeed” which enabled his students to engage in their learning.

6.3.2 Embodying Spirituality

Eight participants from FoE talked about embodying spirituality by “doing the right thing”, “living the life”, or “achieving their purpose in life”, while seven participants from TSBE had diverse viewpoints about the way they embodied their spirituality. They all discussed the way they modelled their attitudes and behaviours for their students to copy them in their personal and professional lives.

Bailey stated that his spirituality was part of his being and was associated with his belief system, and therefore embodied his spirituality at all times. He added that through spirituality he was able to understand that teaching was the purpose of his life, and he could apply his spirituality in his teaching. He explained,

I do try to embody the values that flow from my spiritual beliefs. All people are created equal; all people have inherent dignity and worth. I try to reflect that in the way I interact with people and I try to be

inclusive of people regardless of their backgrounds or any other labels or differences.

Reese and Shelley also embodied their spirituality through their religious identity, which also underpinned their teaching. Shelley believed that teaching was her “calling” in a religious sense. Reese stated that her spirituality enabled her to be true to herself, and practice what she preached, especially the “Golden Rule”. Uri felt that he embodied his spirituality at all times, as it was also part of his belief system. He believed that his spirituality helped him understand why he became an academic and not a businessman, as he felt that his teaching was a continuation of his spirit being. He explained that he was at peace knowing that, as an academic, he “does no harm”, and has never imposed his spiritual beliefs on his students.

Danny had a secular view of how he embodied his spirituality. He believed that there was an endless list of morals and values, which he practiced and preached in his classroom. He felt that these practices helped his pre-service teachers to become role models for their students by ensuring that they, too, practised what they preached. On a similar note, Hayden explained embodying spirituality in the context of the “Good Samaritan”, which he believed was about living life with a set of values about honour, respect, trust, [...] and practicing what is preached.” He felt that is how people embodied their spirituality.

Quinn stated that he embodied his spirituality in everything he did, including teaching. Xavier embodied spirituality by “being spiritual”; but did not explain what he meant by it. He stated that his spirituality enabled him to allow his students to feel free to explore who they were and what they represented, without enforcing his own ideas on them.

Although Toby did not believe that he embodied spirituality, he felt that the way he taught and behaved in class was about caring for his students, which related to his personal values. He felt that these could be perceived by others as “spirituality”, but because he was not religious, he would not use the term as it seems associated with religion.

6.3.3 Teach People in a Safe Environment

Five participants in FoE and four in TSBE discussed the safety of face-to-face or online teaching environments, as necessary to teach any unit, especially those that deal with sensitive topics like spirituality. Most academics from both faculties believed that their students could talk about anything in their classrooms, without fear and with respect. They did this by creating awareness about safety at the beginning of the semester. Ivan, who taught spiritual wellbeing in FoE, explained,

I start the unit right at the beginning with “what is said in this classroom stays in the classroom. We are not here to criticise, we are here to discuss and challenge and debate but we are not here to criticise. We are here to learn and this is a safe place to be able to express your opinion.” Some people feel safer quicker, so they’ll be the ones who will start the discussions, and add a personal perspective. Others will take a bit longer, and some people may not talk openly about themselves at all. It just depends on their nature.

He further elaborated that this open, but safe, classroom atmosphere sometimes led to interesting discussions, which could get personal and emotional for students during the class. Danny, who also taught spiritual wellbeing, added that “emotional outbursts”, like being rude, or getting upset, occurred amongst online

students, who would say much more than they would in an on-campus class. He explained that students with emotional needs were provided with additional support outside teaching, through the university's counselling services.

Bailey and Grace strongly advocated the notion of teaching "people" and not just students who need to pass a course. Bailey asserted that

Recognizing that a whole person comes in the classroom with not just arms, legs, head, and eyes, but they are coming with emotions, and experiences, and values, and beliefs, and they are coming with a spirit; they are coming as a spiritual person who has emotions, and has thoughts. It's important that we recognize that we are teaching people, we are not just teaching content. We are not teaching content to content absorbers. We are teaching people who are complex, and interesting, and valuable, in their own right.

Xavier was of the same opinion and taught spirituality by having "tacit learning outcomes", reflecting a hidden curriculum. He added that his students were allowed to voice their opinion by feeling safe and not vulnerable and could do whatever they wanted as "people" rather than just students attending a course.

Val stated that people from various backgrounds and belief systems are now living together, building close alliances. She explained that her classrooms were more diverse than before, and to make her students feel safe and at ease, she sat with them instead of on the teacher's chair. She would try to get to know her students at the beginning of the semester by informing them that they were safe to share anything in her class and built a trusting environment.

6.3.4 Language of Spirituality

One of the points that arose during the interviews with Alex, Bailey, and Fran was the way students could develop an awareness of spirituality, during teaching, by using an appropriate language. Alex was of the opinion that a consistent language of spirituality is required to teach the concept and creating awareness of its importance for pre-service teachers. He explained that a language of spirituality would need to include words and phrases that could be understood by academics and students alike.

Bailey felt that if he had to teach the concept of spirituality directly, he would use the word “spirituality” in his class and unpack his own understanding of the term. He added that he had been teaching various dimensions of wellbeing, values, and beliefs to his students but had never used the term “spirituality”, because of the ambiguity of the term within the Australian curriculum. In contrast to Bailey, Fran asserted that she would never use the “language of spirituality” with her students.

I would use the language of attention. In outdoor education, when I draw attention to place and they might feel a connection, they might use language around feeling. I’m happy to talk about feelings, but I don’t see that there’s really a place for spirituality.

6.3.5 Teaching Directly or Indirectly

Most participants in both faculties were of the opinion that the concept of spirituality should be taught indirectly. Additionally, four participants from FoE, and four from TSBE believed that spirituality can also be taught directly. Ivan felt that spirituality should be taught directly, and explained,

The definition I use is not about a religious perspective, it’s about a way of thinking and being. So, they [students] just accept it as that. We

have a lot of debates when the topic comes up but I teach it as one of the domains of health education.

Amongst those who believed that spirituality could only be taught indirectly were Alex and Carol. Although a non-believer in spirituality, Carol felt that spirituality could only be taught indirectly and explained the reason for this.

Indirectly, definitely. I don't impose ideas on people. I am very careful because I know that a lecturer can be very persuasive. A good lecturer is a good lecturer because people believe him or her. [...] We have to be very careful to create for people the space in which they can come, in which they can reach the right sensibilities, and the right values.

Quinn believed that students should not be provided with a definition of spirituality, instead they should be allowed to explore their spirituality within their personal state and space. Xavier felt that he would like his students to explore their reality, and their destination in life, and this was only possible if spirituality was taught indirectly.

Danny was amongst those who believed that spirituality could be taught directly and indirectly. He asserted that teaching it either way would require careful planning and implementation, and could be mutually beneficial for both students and the academics.

William was unsure whether he would teach spirituality directly or indirectly, but was of the opinion that the university's graduate attributes require students to be of service to humanity, and that this could be taught indirectly, with a "spirituality angle" or a "lens of spirituality". He did not explain what he meant by these terms, but could relate to connection with others. Toby and Yann were not willing to teach spirituality directly or indirectly. Toby later added that he might teach spirituality

indirectly, by teaching simple things like “moral compass”, enabling students to develop their “fixed and defensible morality” which he thinks could be “spirituality”.

6.4 Discussion on Pedagogical Approaches

While “pedagogy” is a term familiar in education, some academics in TSBE were not aware of its meaning and so initially were unable to talk about it directly. While discussing their pedagogical approaches to teaching concepts, all academics in FoE and most in TSBE were of the opinion that spirituality, or concepts associated with spirituality, influenced their pedagogical approaches to teaching. Religious participants helped their students to think about their values and beliefs, without imposing their personal beliefs, while secular participants believed in being genuine, respecting everyone, and being true to oneself, and modelled this in their classrooms, expecting the same from their students. The way teachers understand spirituality influences their pedagogical approaches to teaching the concept (Lingley, 2016). According to Kernochan et al. (2007) and Lindholm and Astin (2008), teachers who embody their spirituality are able to promote spiritual values like empathy and ethical behaviour within their classrooms and encourage their students to participate in community building activities as well.

Most academics from both faculties stated that they embodied spirituality or concepts they felt were associated with spirituality, and modelled their behaviours for their students to follow, although it needs to be noted that these were self-reported. According to Palmer (1998, p. 1), “we teach who we are”, and, as such, educators’ spirituality is reflected in their work. Modelling enables students to observe how academics behave in any given situation, and allows them to elicit reasons for that behaviour (Halstead, 1999). Tucker (2010, p. 8) explains this further, “If we are to

model a holistic, interconnected, relational way of being and knowing to students, we must work at embodying it.” McLaughlin (2005) explains that people embody their spirituality through their personal values, whether secular or religious. Secular people embody their spirituality by demonstrating their integrity and values around the people they are associated with, while those who are religious may add prayer, meditation, and other activities. A study by Cecero and Prout (2014), conducted at a university in New York, reveals that academics who embody their spirituality use student-centred pedagogies and respect diversity, discuss values, and encourage personal development within their classrooms. It seems most participants from FoE and TSBE, irrespective of their background, claimed to embody their spirituality, which they modelled for students and which influenced their pedagogical approaches.

Lindholm and Astin (2008) assert that the teaching of spirituality, and concepts associated with it, requires a safe, non-judgemental environment, where students are able to share their thoughts openly and fearlessly (see also Neal, 2013; Palmer, 2003). Most participating academics from FoE and TSBE reflected this opinion, discussing the need for safe classroom environments, where students can present their views without feeling vulnerable or judged. Some academics stated that they discussed the rules of a safe environment in class at the beginning of the semester. Some academics also stressed that students have feelings, and acknowledged that teaching sensitive topics may evoke emotions that necessitate counselling. Lindholm and Astin (2008) assert that teaching spirituality requires sensitivity on the part of the academic and students, as personal spiritual experiences are shared. Gibson advocates classrooms where there is “flexibility, creativity, newness, engagement, reflectiveness, and places where teacher and student stories of meaning-making are honoured” (2014, p. 521).

Some FoE academics raised the issue of having a language to teach spirituality that could be understood by academics and students. These academics believed that the lack of such a language of spirituality would be a barrier to teaching. Gunnlaugson and Vokey (2013) are of the same opinion, and explain that incorporating spirituality within higher education would require a shared language understood by all academics, students, and the administration. The fact that spirituality's meaning differs among people may lead to division, instead of inclusion, within a classroom (Geary, 2013), especially if the language is imbalanced or biased towards one view of spirituality, which may result in disrespect (Crossman, 2015b). Rockenbach et al. (2015) suggest that academics should take responsibility for developing a spiritual language, by using students' views of spirituality, and by developing a vocabulary of words, actions, and symbols that could be understood by all. Frohlich (2001) explains that philosophy and theology have some vocabulary in the area of spirituality that could be used to develop of the language of spirituality for education. A language of spirituality would help academics to teach the concept more effectively (Frohlich, 2001; Priestley, 1997; Radford, 2006).

Some of the factors discussed above also influence the choice to teach spirituality directly or indirectly: the awareness and understanding of the term by the educators (Bush, 1999; Trott, 2013, Gibson, 2014), the creation of a safe environment (Hogan, 2009; Rogers & Hill, 2002), use of an all-inclusive language (Manz et al., 2006), fostering diversity (Baha'i International Community, 2010), and respect and acceptance for all present (Lindholm & Astin, 2008). All participants but one believed in teaching spirituality indirectly, with some believing that spirituality could be taught both directly and indirectly. Only one, from FoE, felt that spirituality should only be taught directly. The varied viewpoints on teaching spirituality could be a result of the

uncertainty of the meaning of spirituality and how academics perceived it. Some viewed that teaching spirituality directly would be imposing one's viewpoints on students, while addressing it directly would enable students to be open to the idea that spirituality can exist outside the tenets of religion, being broad in scope.

This raises the issue of teaching it directly or indirectly, and, as suggested by most academics, teaching it indirectly seems to be easier and less complicated due to the nature of the concept. Despite this consensus, other academics felt that teaching spirituality directly would be beneficial. Interestingly, two academics from each faculty stated that they would never teach spirituality in their classrooms, but made suggestions on how it could be taught indirectly.

Another factor discussed by all participants was spirituality could only be taught using student-centred pedagogical approaches, which they used in their other units as well. Hodge and Derezotes (2008) and, Lindholm and Astin (2008) are of the same opinion suggesting that the role of the teacher of spirituality is more of a facilitator of learning than that of a knowledge provider (Hodge & Derezotes, 2008; Lindholm & Astin, 2008). While this is a general expectation in higher education to teach any subject, to teach spirituality this is imperative. The reason for this is the individualised yet complex nature of spirituality needs exploration, rather than direct content teaching and evaluation, that acknowledges students' views sensitively as well. Some academics, however, felt that to teach spirituality there would need to be a clear vision of the expected outcomes and assessment tasks. Palmer (1998) explains that besides being a facilitator, academics would also need to develop additional skillsets to teach sensitively and provide a positive experience for their students. Lindholm and Astin (2008) suggest that spirituality can best be taught using a wide

range of student-centred pedagogies, some of which were discussed by the academics and are presented in the next section.

6.5 Discussion on Different Teaching Methodologies

All academics from FoE and TSBE felt that spirituality could be taught using student-centred teaching approaches that they use to teach other concepts in their units. The teaching methodologies suggested by both groups are similar in nature and can be used on their own or in conjunction with other activities. Lindholm and Astin (2008, p. 187) state that student-centred pedagogical approaches are “designed to promote students’ active engagement in the learning process.” Marques et al. (2014) and Cecero and Prout (2014) also concur that student-centred teaching methods can be beneficial for teaching spirituality in higher education. Table 6.1 also presents the data about suggested teaching approaches advocated by the participants.

6.5.1 Discussions and Debates

Four participants from each of FoE and TSBE said that discussions and debates provide students with opportunities to think outside the content in the curriculum, which helps develop a better understanding of the concepts being taught. These academics felt spirituality could best be taught using this approach.

Danny, who was teaching spiritual wellbeing, explained how he used open discussions in his class. He would start by making a comment or a statement about an issue. He would pose questions around the statement, and invite students to participate in in-depth and open discussions around the topic. Quinn used the same technique to teach his undergraduate cohorts of students and used discussions and debates to teach abstract concepts. Danny and Quinn felt that discussions and debates

enable students to learn about themselves and explore their individual “morals, values, beliefs, and spirituality.”

Ivan explained that he addressed the concept of spiritual wellbeing with his pre-service teachers through discussions and debates on issues, such as religion, that may arise in the classrooms when they go out to teach. He asserted that the increasing diversity in school classrooms requires teachers to be prepared and open-minded about these issues. Sharing his own experience of teaching spiritual wellbeing, Ivan explained,

I’ve had very heated debates in some of the classes around that you have to have a religion, you can’t live without a religion, then someone else would turn around and say but I’m an atheist, I don’t have any belief system, so it’s about being open to difference.

Similarly, Uri also challenged his students to discuss and debate sensitive subjects, at a personal level, to teach them spirituality-related concepts, such as moral reasoning. He explained how he presents his classes with an ethical dilemma and asks what they would do if the role was reversed.

I do role reversal and say, now it’s your grandmother, it’s your uncle, it is you, or your girlfriend, how would that change it [situation]? Here are the impacts, so I want them to debate it, I don’t necessarily come with a conclusion as to which is the preferred answer. I want them to [...] develop their [...] moral reasoning, understand the consequences or implications of those decisions and their actions on a broader set.

Shelley also used discussions and debates in the classroom, and during assessments. In one of her units, her students were required to defend their arguments on personal values, as an assessment task. Reese also used discussions in her

classroom by encouraging her students to discuss their culture and background, to help them feel connected to others, and allowed them to express their “spirituality enthusiastically”. She felt that discussions also helped create an understanding of how different people view spirituality.

William was critical of having discussions and debates on spirituality and related topics for first year undergraduate students. He was of the opinion that, being young, these students would bring in their family values and “would parrot what their parents or local church pastor” would say, and so engaging them in a debate or discussion would be more like “engaging with a third party rather than themselves.” He further asserted that as students get exposed to different sets of values and faiths, and the ethical standards taught at the university, they could learn to engage and re-evaluate the topics.

Some academics suggested the use of discussions and debates enables students to get a broader perspective of what is taught in the curriculum. Safety in a classroom enables students to open up, present ideas, and voice their opinions freely, which helps them learn better. Participants teaching spiritual wellbeing in FoE added that, while students enjoyed discussing their spirituality, some students could also become emotional when discussing personal matters, and need additional support. Hogan (2009) and Rogers and Hill (2002) are of the opinion that discussing spirituality in the classroom can be very stimulating, for students and academics, when the environment is safe.

Although one academic questioned using discussions and debates to teach spirituality to undergraduates, especially as he thought they were immature and would replicate what their religious leaders or parents think of spirituality. Van der Zee (2012) suggests that good open communication, debates, and dialogical interpretive

approaches—where students engage in respectful and participatory discussions—enhance students’ learning. Trott (2013) explains that discussions allow students to address topics around spirituality in an open and non-judgemental way, but warns that debates may do the opposite, and end up proselytising, with a focus on just one viewpoint. The academics’ enthusiasm for debates to teach spirituality may reflect a lack of awareness of this caution.

6.5.2 Reflective Practice

Seven academics from TSBE and only two from FoE suggested reflective practice, where students are encouraged to reflect and then write about their classroom learning in a journal. Alex and Fran stated that they used reflective practice in their units, and suggested that this approach could be used to teach spirituality. Alex used reflective practice to help his students see themselves as professional teachers, after their teaching practice in schools. He felt that this helped his pre-service teachers continue improving themselves as teachers. Fran used reflective practice in her outdoor education unit to enable students to feel the outdoors as part of who they are and to find their place in it. She explained,

The first step is, to pay attention. I will get them to find “their place” so that they’ll go back to their place, for all activities, time, and time, and time, again, and they’ll write about their place. While I’m doing analysis on those [students’] journals, I’m curious about how their attention to place grows, and, for me, because places can be so spirit rich, my hope is they might experience that as well.

Shelley explained that her students’ first assignment was a reflective essay, in which they had to discuss their own moral values, and analyse why some of the things

they did were harder or easier for them. She added that reflective essays helped her students to investigate their own lives, and evaluate what was important to them, and whether doing the right thing was challenging. Zoey also used reflective practice with her students, by enabling them to reflect on very personal and sensitive issues. While she did not engage with students on those issues, she encouraged them to think about them. Similarly, Uri also got his students to reflect on issues in class and hoped that his students would carry this practice with them to their professional lives. He added that, as an academic, he too reflected on a number of issues to improve his teaching and learning.

The literature, too, acknowledges that Reflective practice seems to be a very popular pedagogical approach to teaching spirituality. Trott (2013) used it to encourage students for self-directed learning, where students listened, reflected, and then wrote in their journals. Others combined reflective practices with other teaching methods like essays, case studies and discussions, as done by the academics in TSBE (Lindholm & Astin, 2008; Trott, 2013). Reflective practices enable students to connect with themselves as spiritual beings (Rockenbach et al., 2015). The literature suggests that journal writing is a systematic activity that enables students to reflect on their learning about their personal experiences and understanding of spirituality (Allison & Broadus, 2009; Bush, 1999; Horner & Tucker, 2013; Rockenbach et al., 2015; Trott, 2013). Everett's study (2013) on reflective journaling showed students not only thought about the content they were learning but also came to understand the challenges they faced, and their capacity to manage those challenges. The students' journals also helped the academic to learn more about students on an individual level and identify the issues in teaching and learning.

Although a widely recommended approach, Timoštšuk and Ugaste (2010) assert that reflective practice needs careful planning. They suggest that academics must design activities that enable students to reflect, and be aware that students' emotions and sensitivities may need to be managed. A strong relationship of trust and care between academics and students is needed, especially when dealing with sensitive issues like spirituality (Lovat et al., 2010).

6.5.3 Case Studies

Only one participant from FoE, compared with six from TSBE, advocated the use of case studies in their classes. Alex, Quinn, Shelley, Uri, William, Yann, and Zoey provided their students with cases to study, which had complex issues to analyse, and required making informed and appropriate decisions for each case, with justifications. Some academics felt that certain of those decisions involved spirituality. Alex felt that exploring case studies for deeper meanings can create “spiritual awareness” within students and academics, and he advocated the use of case studies as an effective method to teach spirituality.

Trott (2013) and Manz et al. (2006) confirm the usefulness of this approach. They used case studies to teach spirituality in their classrooms. Students studied the cases, and reflected on the outcomes, using spiritual virtues within the context of workplace spirituality as a basis for decision-making. This method is more effective when used with other teaching methods, such as discussions, storytelling, reflective practice, and group work (Mezirow, 1997).

6.5.4 Storytelling

Three academics from FoE, Alex, Danny, and Ivan, and two academics from TSBE, Quinn and Reese, used storytelling in their classes to teach concepts, and felt

that this would be appropriate for teaching spirituality. These academics felt comfortable sharing their personal life experiences, as stories, to teach various ideas within their units. Storytelling is a process of communication that engages people through shared understanding of experiences narrated as a story (Hamstra, 2017). Storytelling has been used as a teaching method since Plato, who used personal stories, parables, and myths to engage students (Abrahamson, 1998). Abrahamson (1998, p. 446) adds that “storytelling in higher education enhances students’ opportunities to engage in cooperative inquiry” as it builds connections between the teacher, the students, and the course content. It provides a context for active learning, and enables students to engage in discussions, while reflecting on the concepts of spirituality from the story, and encourages students to share their own stories as well (Fox et al., 2017).

Alex explained how he developed a love for education and became a teacher, and said that he used this story in his classroom to inspire his students. He stated that he had joined an alternative school where students were allowed to learn everything “naturally”, and, as they were never forced, they were very eager to learn. Similarly, Danny liked to share his personal stories with his students when teaching spiritual wellbeing, “to help them understand that you can go through challenges in life and still come out and be okay.”

Quinn explained that using the storytelling approach enabled students to relate to him as he shared his life experiences and the ethical or cultural issues that arose during his career that led him to be an academic. He added that students were then asked about how they would have dealt with those situations if they were in his place.

As Reese’s life revolved around her religion, she liked to share her own religious stories with her students, and started conversations around them. Sometimes

students wanted to know more about her life, so she shared more, but was careful not to impose her beliefs on them.

6.5.5 Individual Exploration and Experience

Six participants from FoE and four from TSBE felt that each student has a personal understanding of spirituality, and allowing them to explore and share their spirituality in class would enable students to understand it` from diverse perspectives. Alex and Bailey encouraged their students to explore themselves as individuals, and as potential teachers, using their experiences and views. Bailey explained,

People might experience things differently, but essentially, if they know either you are trying to do the right thing by them and have them included and value them, not many people get offended by that. So, in terms of my spirituality, students will hopefully see my spirituality at the level of being inclusive, being kind, being thoughtful, valuing everybody as individuals, valuing people as having inherent worth.

Similarly, Xavier allowed his students to explore themselves and their learning, by enabling them to develop their spirituality by using his own spirituality indirectly. He felt that his spirituality allowed him to enable “people to grow and develop as human beings. It is through finding a way to allow people to know who they are and what they represent and giving them the authority to be authentic” with themselves and others.

Fran discussed the way the experiences in her outdoor education class could help create an awareness within her students towards their spirituality, associated with exploring the idea of “place” in the outdoors.

I think too often in outdoor education, one can be so focused on the skill—rock climbing or canoeing, or your friends, or just yourself and trying to stay warm and dry. The place or the context; that, for me, is so moving and so humbling and it's a state of my spirituality. I will provide occasions through very structured activities to awaken them to their place.

Some academics suggested using a combination of all the teaching methods discussed above to teach spirituality. Danny shared two experiences around teaching concepts associated with spirituality during “happiness week” that was celebrated at his campus a few years ago. He used various teaching methods, including discussions, reflective practice, storytelling, case studies, and individual exploration and experience. In the first experience, students were asked to write about three happy moments that they “experienced”, each day for a week. He explained that initially students found this activity very challenging, but by the end of the week, their mindsets changed, and they started to focus on the positive things that were happening to them which made them happy. Danny related this to developing students’ spiritual wellbeing. The second structured teaching and learning activity for the week was about doing “random acts of kindness”, and reporting back to class on their actions and feelings, and the feelings of the other person. Danny shared the learning experience of one of his students:

I had one student who said [...] he initially [...] thought that is a lot of rubbish and he really didn't want to do it. Then, he was in situation at a supermarket and an old person had a bag of oranges, and the bag split and the oranges went everywhere. In his head he thought, “Oh! Here is a chance to do what I need to do, if I help this person.” He said,

ordinarily he wouldn't have stopped and would have kept walking, but this particular time he thought, "No, I am going to stop and help this person 'cos I have to do this as part of what I have been told to do." So, he helped this old man and carried over the groceries out to the car. The old man was very grateful for his assistance, and he [the student] said that it really changed the way he thought about things. He got such a buzz from helping the old man that he wanted to change the way he does things.

Danny explained that these structured activities for teaching spiritual wellbeing could be used to teach spirituality.

Some academics also believed that instead of teaching spirituality, students should be allowed to explore and experience spirituality on an individual basis, which would be more beneficial. They felt that they could facilitate the teaching of the concept by asking students specific questions and have them share their experiences. This could be appropriate especially in teacher education, where pre-service teachers could explore their spirituality and apply it within their classrooms as teachers. Natsis (2016) is of the opinion that "teachers are now faced with the question of how to respond to the intrinsic spiritual awareness of secondary school students and the subsequent inquiry process into matters of personal spirituality, meaning and worldview" (p. 66). While some academics in FoE have been trying to address this indirectly, there seems to be a greater need to enable pre-service teachers to cater to this need within Australia (Rogers & Hill, 2002).

The question of whether spirituality should be taught directly in higher education, or indirectly, or "tacitly" as suggested by some academics, by teaching *with* spirituality had no clear answer from the academics. What was clear, was that

academics believe that the pedagogical approaches they use to teach other units could be used to teach spirituality. The only difference seemed to be the additional factors of needing a spiritual language and a safe environment with support for the emotional needs of students.

6.6 Theme 2: Teaching Spirituality and Students' Professional Identities

The second research question also explored whether spirituality might impact the professional identities of students emerging from the university. Academics from FoE and TSBE presented their viewpoints, as shown in Tables 6.2 and 6.3 respectively, and summarised in Table 6.4. The data for this section emerged from question 5 of the interview schedule: “In what ways do you feel these [spiritual] aspects may influence the development of your students’ identities as professionals?”

6.7 Faculty of Education (FoE)

Table 6.2 demonstrates that, besides the knowledge and skills required in the curriculum, all nine academics in FoE taught values like respect and kindness, and attributes such as open-mindedness and responsibility to their students. They felt that they were teaching more than just the curriculum.

All academics expected their pre-service teachers to be effective and confident professionals, who would use the values and attributes learnt at university to make ethical and well-informed decisions as professionals. Four academics stated that the teaching profession is altruistic in nature, and provides intrinsic rewards, and thus relates to spirituality. When discussing ways in which spirituality may influence students’ professional identities, six participants felt that their pre-service teachers

would have the ability to reflect upon their teaching and focus on continuous learning and professional development when they go out into their professions. One participant added that spirituality helps teachers cope with continuous changes happening around them and viewed it as a necessity.

Table 6.2

FoE Academics' viewpoints on the role of spirituality in developing students' professional identities

Subthemes	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Students learn more than the curriculum	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Students given toolbox to make ethical and well-informed decisions as professionals	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Spirituality would have a fundamental impact on education students' professional identities	x	x			x	x		x	x
Teaching is altruistic in nature		x			x			x	x

Description of the Data

6.7.1 Students Learn more than the Curriculum to become Professionals

All participants from FoE were of the opinion that the teacher education curriculum provides a knowledge base to build the pre-service teachers as professionals, but academics teach more than what is expected in the curriculum to develop “effective professional” teachers. They all believed that they brought the “values”, “ethics”, or “spiritual aspects” of their lives to their teaching for students to be able to learn and apply in their own lives.

Danny said that teachers develop as professionals through the curriculum and through life experiences as individuals and as professionals. He added that he left

subtle messages, like being resilient, through the experiential life stories shared with his students, and hoped “that the kids have taken on some of the messages that you have told them, and will bring that forth into their lives as well as their own teaching.” Danny said that he expected his students would “have a little bit more flexibility in the way they think and view the world at a young age”, which was the reason he left those messages. He felt that teaching spirituality “would definitely have an influence, a positive influence on their own personal identities and then how they then move forward as a teacher in classroom.”

Fran believed that she helped her outdoor education pre-service teachers to develop a relationship with place, outside the curriculum, which she said was like helping them develop their professionalism through connecting their spirituality with their place in outdoor education. In another unit she taught, she addressed concepts like respect, morals, ethics, and values to develop students’ professional identity, but avoided spirituality, as she felt it was irrelevant.

Grace was of the opinion that, in addition to the curriculum, pre-service teachers should be taught to develop attributes that could enhance their professionalism. She developed those attributes in her students by telling them that they should prioritise establishing relationships with their school students. She said, “If you’re going to be an effective teacher, you need to suppress that selfishness,” and help each individual student in the class to “self-actualise”. Grace explained that to be effective professional teachers, her pre-service teachers were given tips and suggestions which she felt were outside the curriculum: “teaching ethically”, “preparing good lessons”, “giving proper feedback”, and “communicating” empathically.

6.7.2 Students Given a Toolbox to Make Ethical and Well-Informed Decisions as Professionals

All participants also talked about developing their pre-service teachers into professionals with diverse attributes such as confidence, diversity, and respect for basic human values. These academics expected their students as professionals to have the ability to make right, ethical, well-informed, and value-driven decisions. Bailey and Carol explained that they provided their students with a “toolbox” that could help them build their professional capacities, which included fostering diversity, human rights, diversity, values, identifying right from wrong, and being accountable for their own decisions as professionals. Bailey expected his students to have well-developed values and beliefs, with a sense of their identity, and their relationships with their students, before they enter their profession. Bailey explained his expectations:

They will go out as professionals who’ve thought about their values and beliefs, and have come to a sense of themselves, in terms of how they relate to student diversity. [...] Their position [on diversity] will be informed by some really good milestones in terms of human rights, and values, and policy and standards. [...] They’ll have a sense of who I am as a teacher in relation to student diversity that’s well informed. In the practical level, they’ll have it in their toolbox, and they’ll have a reason why. Hopefully they’ll have a reinforced sense that people are important.

Alex felt that, because of his own spirituality, he was aware of his students’ needs and was able to help them develop into confident and well-balanced professional teachers. Carol, in contrast, felt that spirituality would have no impact on

the professional identities of her students as it has no place in education. She discussed spirituality in terms of religion.

There is no place for religion in the modern universe; there is certainly no place for religious fundamentalism. I am not a relativist, but I believe in rational freedom above all things. So my task in respecting my students is to help them to develop the capacity to decide how to act, how to live, which values to embrace [...] When they are in my class, they see respect for humans, they see respect for reason, they see respect for rational freedom and [...] that I put everything into my teaching; the respect of their decision to be there with me and learn from me, is that we can make good rational ethical decisions about the way we ought to be.

6.7.3 Spirituality would have a Fundamental Impact on Education Students' Professional Identities

Most participants in FoE felt that incorporating spirituality in teacher education would have a positive impact on the development of their students' professional identities. They were of the opinion that enabling students to reflect on and improve their teaching practices is associated with spirituality, and helping pre-service teachers develop their spirituality would help them improve their professionalism. Ivan, who taught spiritual wellbeing, said that teaching spirituality provided his pre-service teachers with a broader perspective of themselves, and the ability to deal with the diverse student population that they would encounter in their professional lives. He felt that his spiritual wellbeing unit provides students with a starting point to think about spirituality and its importance for teachers. He also

believed that spirituality and teachers' professional identities go hand-in-hand, and that teachers' professional identities develop over time, with experience. He felt that teaching concepts like spirituality would enable them to cope with the professional world.

Grace felt that a spiritual or "Zen" experience could enable pre-service teachers to identify things that matter to them, preparing them to become professional teachers. She suggested an activity that could be done in teacher education, where she could take her students in a "space of nothingness", in a blank room, facing a wall, make them sit, and get them to shed their favourite possessions into an imaginary bin, through voice modulation. She explained that those things that they shed are like layers of skins they shed to reveal the important things in life, and once they shed those skins, at the end of the activity she would say, "now, you're ready to teach." She elaborated that her Zen experience had helped her to identify her spirituality, and believed that the emptying of one's headspace really helps give clarity and develops one as a professional. Grace felt that the same would help pre-service teachers.

6.7.4 Teaching is Altruistic in Nature and Provides Intrinsic Rewards

Some participants implicitly talked about the altruistic nature of teaching. Bailey stated that most of his pre-service teachers come into the teaching profession as they want to "make a difference", and have "a sense of purpose". Ellen suggested reasons why people choose to become teachers:

We tend to attract people into education who self-select and they already have a disposition of care for others. [...] Girls move in there because there's a traditional thing about nurturing, [...] and men [...]

become teachers if they want to be a sports person or phys ed [physical education] teacher.

Ellen explicitly discussed that the teaching profession is altruistic in nature, requires resilience, and has intrinsic rewards. She explained that “altruistic behaviour is the extension of people’s spirituality,” and that those who love to teach children receive intrinsic rewards. She stated that when she was teaching, she used to tell her pre-service teachers that if they expected to become millionaires as teaching professionals, they should search for other career options, and they would not find teaching enjoyable. Some of altruistic behaviours that Ellen would discuss with her students were “motivating children, engaging students, improving their self-concept, and improving their sense of self.”

6.8 Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE)

Table 6.3 shows that out of ten TSBE academics, seven discussed that, besides the curriculum, they taught their students to think beyond what was being taught. All participants provided their students with a toolbox that they could use to make responsible ethical decisions as business professionals. Four academics were of the opinion that teaching the concept of spirituality at the university could have a fundamental impact on students’ professional identities, as they would be trained for life, and be able to manage their personal and professional lives well. Only one academic discussed the transformational process of education and spirituality, which could help students develop as professionals.

Table 6.3

TSBE Academics' viewpoints on the role of spirituality in developing students' professional identities

Subthemes	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Students learn more than the curriculum	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		
Students given a toolbox to make ethical and well-informed decisions as professionals	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Spirituality would have a fundamental impact on business students' professional identities		x	x	x	x		x	x		x
Transformational process										x

Description of the Data

6.8.1 Students Learn more than the Curriculum to Become Professionals

Most academics in TSBE explained that students were taught to become professionals by indirect teaching of values and attributes such as respect and open-mindedness. Quinn perceived an academic as having a powerful position, especially for young students who are vulnerable and naïve. Responding to how spirituality could influence the development of students' professional identities, he explained that he challenged his students to discuss topics outside the curriculum such as what they would do given a situation that could be morally or ethically wrong for some. He explained, "You just have to open their minds to another way of doing things and that's part of your job. That's what we're here for as lecturers. Not just curriculum contents."

Similarly, Shelley taught other concepts from outside the curriculum to her students to help build their professional identities as a whole. She explained that

within the postgraduate program her students were older and had broader life experiences, so she got “them to sit and think and to look at what is, and then helps [them] to reflect and reshape their lives.” She also felt that these students would have their own understanding of spirituality and may not want to learn about spirituality directly. She explained that they could be taught concepts related to spirituality, such as “ethics”, “corporate social responsibility”, and “moral dimensions of life” that would help them develop as ethical business professionals.

6.8.2 Students Given a Toolbox to make Ethical and Well-Informed Decisions as Professionals

All participants discussed the professional attributes needed by their students that would help them become ethical business professionals. They stated that they provided their students with a toolbox that enabled their students to make well-informed ethical decisions. Reese explained that she allowed her students to engage with other people and their spirituality in class, by discussing the diverse viewpoints held by students. She said that this enabled students to build attributes that could help them develop as professionals who can bridge the gap that might exist between organisational goals and their own for mutual benefit.

Toby believed that he helped develop his students’ professional identities by discussing what makes a good person and having a moral compass. He asserted that most students who come to university have already developed their moral compass, which may not be modifiable by a course in spirituality. He elaborated that he felt that a person without a moral compass would want to get ahead, and get a promotion, irrespective of who deserves it, and would have a narcissistic personality. He was of the opinion that such an individual would never change, even if you taught them

about spirituality in great detail. Toby believed that spirituality could only impact students' professional identities if students naturally desire to modify their behaviour patterns. He felt this was a challenge. He added that he also provided his students with experiential activities that enabled them to develop a wider view of issues they could encounter at their workplace and make well-informed ethical decisions as business professionals.

Yann taught his students to learn to deal with dilemmas and discomfort, by providing opportunities to practice in class, mimicking real life situations that may occur within their profession. He believed that professionals must "remove their profession from themselves" as it affects objectivity, and could result in unethical decisions. He felt that teaching spirituality, which requires people to connect with others, would be inappropriate as it would impact students' professionalism and would have negative consequences in the real world, such as litigation or prosecution for wrong decisions as per the law.

Val felt that she was teaching concepts associated with spirituality and modelled spiritual behaviours. She stated, "I think that they [students] probably don't spend enough time with me, but I know that they would pick up maybe one thing, and that might make a contribution towards their professional identity."

6.8.3 Spirituality would have a Fundamental Impact on Business Students' Professional Identities

Most TSBE participants felt that teaching spirituality would have a "fundamental" impact on business students' professional identities. Xavier explained that this was because students would learn to connect with themselves and others, enabling them to manifest their spirituality in a difficult situation as professionals.

Although Zoey was an atheist, she strongly believed in spirituality and felt that spirituality would have a strong impact on the professional identity of students. She said spirituality helps people connect with themselves and identify what they truly want in life. She stated, “In terms of spirituality, that’s how I think I would see it, I think I’m in the business of trying to help people discover something about who they are,” enabling them to choose the identity they want to take as professionals. Uri felt that as he was teaching aspects of spirituality in his unit indirectly, he enabled his students to develop as professionals by generating insights into issues arising within the global professional arena. William believed that spirituality is about being good and respectful and is expected of professionals in the workplace. However, he was unaware of how spirituality could impact the professional identities of the students because of the lack of a unit or course on spirituality at the university. He said,

I would imagine it [spirituality] would impact them [students] as much as an ethics course would. It would flavour their ability to make sense of the world around them, especially when they go to an industry where the rules are going to be set. “If you want to be successful in this industry this is what you have to do.” “Okay, well if I have to do those things how can I do it spiritually? How can I do it ethically?” So, I think, it would colour the way they see the world.

Xavier also talked about the challenges faced by early career management professionals especially if they have a spiritual base. He added that they might get into organisations that do not respect them as people, or their values, and treat them as “hot blooded robots”. He felt that this organisational attitude could frustrate them but their spirituality may help them use their skills developed for “twenty first century professionals”. He explained that he tries to teach his students to be “a little bit more

alive or essentially find a way of surviving” and, “find a way of connecting with the people who they are responsible for”, and to him, this is how spirituality impacts students’ professional identities.

6.8.4 Transformational Process

Zoey was the only academic who believed that education was a transformational process and very spiritual in nature. She stated that it enables students to develop wisdom and evolve into someone better. While she was atheist, she felt that all education is spiritual, irrespective of the subject, and felt that spirituality in education was like believing in transcendence that enables people to do the right thing, or live a good life. She believed spirituality was a transformational process that motivates students to connect with themselves and helps them move forward, and building their professional identity thereby.

6.9 Comparing FoE and TSBE

Table 6.6 demonstrates that despite there being two different faculties, there are a number of similarities in the professional expectations in both faculties. Both groups expected that their students would emerge as confident, respectful, humane professionals who would make responsible, ethical decisions through reflection and action. Some academics, who taught spiritual wellbeing or concepts associated with spirituality, felt that they were already helping their students develop as professionals by allowing them to reflect and improve on their abilities outside the curriculum. Similarly, academics in both faculties believed that teaching about spirituality, directly or indirectly, and challenging their students to think beyond the obvious, and discuss issues that are not present in the curriculum could help them become

professionals that could cope with the changing workplace environments. Many academics in FoE and TSBE felt that spirituality would have a fundamental impact on their graduates' professional identities. One academic in TSBE asserted that education with spirituality is a transformational process enabling individuals to become empathic professionals. Some academics in FoE also asserted that the teaching profession is more altruistic in nature and that this may be linked to spirituality

Table 6.4

FoE and TSBE Academics' viewpoints on the role of spirituality in developing students' professional identities

Subthemes	FoE	TSBE	TOTAL
Students learn more than just the curriculum	9	7	16
Students given an attribute toolbox to make right, ethical and well informed decisions as professionals	9	10	19
Teaching is altruistic in nature	4	0	4
Spirituality would have a fundamental impact on business students' professional identities	7	4	11
Transformational process	0	1	1

6.10 Discussion on the Role of Spirituality in Developing Students' Professional Identities

During the 1960s era, there was discourse around professionalising workers, proposing that all people engaged in any sort of profession would need to develop an understanding of how societies function both economically and morally, and to bring meaning to their work (Hodgson, 2005; Watson, 2008). Professionalism emerged from the concept of being professional and “contains the core elements of: disciplinary-based knowledge, ethical principles, time and place specific work practices, practitioner autonomy, a commitment to clients' needs, supportive

collaborative cultures, and a strong sense of professional identity” (Scotland, 2014, p. 33). Ibarra (1999, p. 764) defines professional identity “as the relatively stable and enduring constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role”.

In contrast, Weiner and Torres (2016) see professional identity as far less stable and more open to day-to-day influence, when they describe it as a “dynamic and ongoing process in which individuals make sense of their experiences to form and (re)form beliefs about what it means to be of a particular profession” (p. 77). Like Ibarra (1999), however, they also capture the sense of professional identity comprising the personal beliefs that make up an individual’s sense of self in relation to their work.

Although the second research question and the specific interview question 5 (see Figure 3.1) focused on professional identity, the specific concept defined above, most academics appeared to discuss broader professionalism, which involves a number of concepts including professional identity.

All participants from FoE, and a majority from TSBE, stated that they taught more than just the formal curriculum, and this challenged them to think beyond what was being taught, which some believed was associated with spirituality. All academics explained that they provided their students with a toolbox with knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences that would build their capacities to make ethical and well-informed decisions as professionals.

Some academics from FoE felt that they enabled their students to develop the skillsets and attributes required to become professional educators, by using their own spirituality, while others helped their students to connect with themselves through reflective practices. One academic explained that students’ professional identities

evolve over time, as they gain experience in life, but did not get into the details of how it evolves. Other academics also stated that as teachers gain more experience, their attitudes towards their professional roles change, such as wanting to go into administrative roles, such as a school principal, rather than just teach. Lasky (2005) and Scotland (2014) explain that teachers' professional identity evolves over their career paths, and requires teachers' awareness of themselves and others they influence. Teachers' professional identities also modify according to their own personality traits, the educational institution where they were trained, and the requirements of the government (Lasky, 2005). In the present study, two academics teach spiritual wellbeing in response to the mandated Health and Physical Education Curriculum by the Department of Education, Tasmania (2008). These academics stated that the pre-service teachers who studied spiritual wellbeing felt that it had improved their attitudes, mindsets, and teaching. Most academics in FoE hoped that their students would continue their learning and development, through practice and reflection of their teaching activities and professional skills.

Teachers' professional identities can be cultivated through education with a clear vision of the kind of society teachers would like to be part of building (Gibson, 2013), giving them a sense of purpose and meaning as professionals (O'Connor, 2008).

Academics in TSBE also believed that they opened their students' minds to possibilities by reflecting on various aspects of their lives to build their confidence. These academics taught concepts associated with spirituality that were not directly addressed in the curriculum they were teaching. They felt that teaching more than what was in the curriculum helped their students develop their professional identities.

All academics in FoE and most in TSBE discussed providing students with a toolbox of knowledge, skills, and attributes, with the hope that their students would develop as effective and confident professionals with values and beliefs that foster diversity, human rights, safety, and respect for all. They believed that their students would have a sense of their professional identities, and have the ability to build effective relationships with the diverse people around them. Compassion, connections, vision, and hospitality are some of the spiritual practices (Brussat & Brussat, 2017), that are required to build effective relationships and are perhaps part of the toolbox provided by these academics.

Gunz and Gunz (2007), Ibarra (1999), and Winter (2009) note that universities expect their graduates to have developed certain attributes and values, such as collegiality and support for diversity, and can influence the workplace positively. Some universities around the world have modified their curricula by providing value-laden knowledge, skills, and experiences for their students to help them develop their professional identities, that are meaningful and purposeful (Winter, 2009).

Some participants in FoE viewed teaching as an altruistic profession as it encourages children to develop their capacities as best as possible, and the success of these students provides intrinsic rewards to teachers. Senapaty and Bhuyan (2014) contrasts professions like teaching that are altruistic in nature and aimed at providing the greater good for everyone, with business which they claim often focuses on managing people rather than doing good. While this may be true to some extent, programs like corporate social responsibility, and sustainability, are aimed at doing good for others, and seem to be related to spirituality (Fry, 2005; Kelly, 2007), and are undertaken by businesses and business professionals. Perhaps the business

profession will evolve into an altruistic profession in time. The process seems to have started, as evidenced by the number of university units that teach these concepts.

Academics in FoE and TSBE believed that teaching spirituality would have a positive impact on students' professional identities. Some academics perceived that teaching spirituality would develop reflection skills and that the transformative process of education enables individuals to develop their professional identities. Lozano and Ribera (2011) are of the opinion that spirituality has an impact on professionals, although it depends on the nature of the individual and the effort they put into it.

Both education and business graduates' professional identities develop by associating meaning to their work, which motivates them to perform and contribute to their workplace. Teachers' professional identities encompass their spirituality, and enables them to connect with students, especially during stressful situations (Stanley, 2011), and allows them to practice social and morally responsible behaviours (Gibson, 2014). Business graduates develop their professional identities by adapting themselves to various career roles and environments while feeling "a sense of oneness with their profession" (Guan et al., 2016, p. 117) and willingness to meet challenges throughout their career growth. When faced with ethical dilemmas, these professionals are able to make decisions that would benefit their organisations in an ethical way (Gunz & Gunz, 2007).

6.11 Theme 3: Challenges with Teaching Spirituality

Academics from FoE and TSBE discussed the challenges they perceived associated with teaching spirituality within higher education, as shown in Tables 6.5 and 6.6. Table 6.7 demonstrates their cumulative viewpoints.

6.12 Faculty of Education (FoE)

Table 6.5 lists the subthemes reflecting the FoE’s academics’ perceptions of the challenges present in teaching spirituality within higher education. All nine participants found the ambiguity of a definition of spirituality itself as the greatest challenge. Two participants felt that the “separation of church and state” was another major challenge, particularly relevant to teacher education. Six participants discussed academics’ attitudes and capacity—such as power, fear, and selfishness, and the lack of knowledge and skills to teach the concept—would be challenging. A few academics claimed that there might be resistance by academics to teach spirituality. Only one participant from FoE felt that there was insufficient diversity in student cohorts within FoE, making it challenging to teach spirituality as most students would have a too-similar understanding of it.

Table 6.5

FoE Academics’ viewpoints on challenges with teaching spirituality

Subthemes	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Defining spirituality	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Separation of church and state	x				x				
Academics’ attitudes		x		x	x		x	x	x
Perceived value of spirituality in the university		x						x	
Not a diverse student cohort				x					

Description of the Data

6.12.1 Defining Spirituality

As discussed in previous chapters, all participants from FoE found defining spirituality challenging, and acknowledged it could have different meanings for different people. Talking about the challenges of defining spirituality and its incorporation in the teacher education curriculum, Alex explained,

I think the fact that it is used to mean different things by different people, and people are generally inclined to not explore those differences. [...] I can't trust that when I use the word spirituality, everybody I use it with understands it the same way as I do.

Bailey also believed that the varied understanding of spirituality could be the reason why academics “never discuss spirituality” within the faculty. Grace gave an insight into the reason why academics avoid the topic of spirituality. She believed that most academics associate spirituality with religion, and talking about it involves “self-disclosure”, which could make them feel vulnerable. She added that in an environment where academics “are confronted with their own arrogance” and need to respond to everything “intellectually,” they find it challenging to talk about intangible or metaphysical things. She felt that this would make it difficult to incorporate spirituality within higher education.

6.12.2 Separation of Church and State

Only two academics, Ellen and Grace, discussed the idea of the separation of church and state. Ellen explained,

We follow the American model, where we've segregated the arts and others [religion]. In our constitution, we're a secular society in the

sense that we don't have any established religion, and therefore, those issues [religious] are being reduced. I think we do talk about it [spirituality], but we talk about it in euphemisms, like sustainability, caring for society, caring for others. It's *there* but it's packaged a different way.

Grace was of the opinion that while the separation of church and state was good, some aspects of spirituality should have been kept for the benefit of the students. She felt that the whole education system needs to be "ripped apart" because,

You got the kids coming out of school, who will have developed no understanding of learning, who don't feel socially engaged, who don't see a future for themselves. [...] You see there's something seriously wrong within those kids' spirits.

6.12.3 Academics' Attitudes

Some academics felt that academics' attitudes about themselves and others would be a challenge to incorporating spirituality within teacher education. Grace was of the opinion that academics have issues with power and feel the need to control others. She also said that most academics were fearful people, mostly about their jobs and peoples' opinions. She added that the structural systems within bureaucracies, with legal issues at every step, create more fear within society, which hinders the way academics would like to teach. Grace felt that academics were also very selfish as they are more focused on their own career paths rather than focusing on teaching for the benefit of others. She clarified,

There is that selfishness of those who are focused on their academic research. That is a meanie [nasty]. "That is what *I* want to do. That is

my career”, and doing that is massively selfish and self-centred. How can you ethically teach, in the sense when you are totally self-centred, where your own needs exceed those of others?

Ellen also felt that most academics were power hungry, selfish, arrogant, and fearful. She had been a leader in the faculty and believed that she was not like most academics, and despite having a lot of power, she felt she never abused it. She hoped that her colleagues felt the same. She explained that she was not authoritarian, and used her powers to help others grow and develop, as she believed she was an active leader who was interested in what “her people” were doing.

Besides these attitudes, some academics in FoE felt that teaching spirituality would require additional knowledge and skillsets, and academics’ attitudes towards receiving a training to teach spirituality would be a challenge. Hayden asserted that training is required to develop skills to deal with questions that may arise while teaching sensitive subjects like spirituality. He explained that as a youth he had to deal with sensitive issues, which caused him a lot of trouble because he lacked those skills, and he asserted that academics need to be trained to teach spirituality. Ivan explained this further,

I think you need to have training for it [teaching spirituality]. You need to have had some experience working in this space because it’s a difficult space. You’ve got to know what it is that you’re talking about. [...] You’ve got to feel comfortable teaching those areas. [...] So, it is to do with requiring training and even if it is just an awareness of what it is and what it can mean to different people.

6.12.4 The Perceived Value of Spirituality in the University

Bailey and Hayden discussed how academics in universities could resist the inclusion of spirituality in their faculties, mainly because of its perceived value at the university. Hayden asserted that academics have a limited amount of time to teach their content and adding a sensitive concept like spirituality could add to workload, and, as such, would be resisted.

Bailey added that academics would simply resist teaching spirituality because of its varied meaning. He explained that even if a document like the *Melbourne Declaration* had clearly defined spirituality, they would resist teaching it, saying that it did not represent them. Unless there is “a strong mandate” to teach the concept, he said that academics in universities will resist it.

6.12.5 Not a Diverse Student Cohort

Only one academic, Danny, identified that the student cohort in FoE was not diverse enough to teach spirituality. He felt that different viewpoints would not be available to facilitate effective discussion, and perceived this as a challenge to teaching spirituality.

6.13 Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE)

All academics in TSBE perceived challenges associated with teaching spirituality within their faculty. As demonstrated in Table 6.6, all academics believed that the lack of an academic definition of spirituality was the greatest challenge, followed by the separation of church and state. Five participants added that academics’ attitudes towards professional development to teach spirituality could be a

major challenge. Seven academics were of the opinion that universities are secular in nature, and academics would resist the inclusion of spirituality, as they were already teaching business ethics which covered some aspects of spirituality.

Table 6.6

TSBE's Academics' viewpoints on challenges with teaching spirituality

Subthemes	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Defining spirituality	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Separation of church and state	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Academics' attitudes	x	x		x			x		x	
Perceived value of spirituality in the university	x	x	x			x	x		x	x

Description of Data

6.13.1 Defining Spirituality

Most participants found defining spirituality challenging and felt that this would be the main challenge to teaching the concept in business education. Quincy explained, "I suspect that people are challenged by the idea of spirituality because [...] I'm struggling to define it myself. It's a challenging concept for anyone, particularly students." William also found it challenging to define spirituality as he felt that it was irrational and complicated. He added, "you can't just teach people spirituality is about being nice, 'doing unto others as you would have them do' in the same situation, because that's not how the world works; it is more complicated than that."

6.13.2 Separation of Church and State

An important point discussed by almost all the participants was the fact that religion and spirituality could never be taught within universities, as they are secular institutions. Shelley elaborated,

In Victoria, for example, it is in fact against the law for mainstream universities to teach theology. The scientific world view is very dominant in the university context. Positivism as a particular approach to the pursuit of knowledge in universities is very powerful, certainly within the management course. So, positivism—at least in its origin—is very much about trying to move away from the role of God, because that was seen as presuppositions. So there is a whole tradition of universities that makes it really hard to bring spirituality into the centre of the core of the university.

Toby felt that “spirituality and religion are potentially divisive and controversial, but can be discussed in the classroom”, despite the separation of the church and state. He asserted that while there is a potential for teaching spirituality in the business and management courses under the guise of good corporate citizenship, within the ethics or marketing course, it would still be challenging, because the learning outcomes would not be measurable.

Uri questioned the historical facts where religion and spirituality encouraged intelligent people to fight wars and develop destructive weapons with devastating consequences. He felt that this was the reason for the separation of religion and state, and as such bringing spirituality in business education would be a challenge.

6.13.3 Academics' Attitudes

Academics in TSBE also felt that academics' attitudes towards spirituality could make it a challenge to teach spirituality within the business school. Some academics felt that academics are fearful to teach a new concept as they would lack the knowledge and skillsets. Quincy, Reese, Toby, William, and Yann felt that academics lack time for training and development, and, unless they deem it important, they would not do it. Quincy explained that when he joined the university, he lacked teaching skills and no training was provided to new inductees. He learnt everything on the job with the help of his mentors, and felt that introducing a new concept like spirituality could be more challenging, as academics may not have the confidence, or authority, to help them deliver the concept successfully. Reese and Toby were of the same opinion, but added that academics who already taught concepts related to spirituality could mentor other academics, who may need training in the area. William was of the opinion that academics' attitudes towards teaching spirituality needed to change by encouraging academics to connect spirituality with their subject areas.

If you're going to do it, do it. That would be my recommendation.

Can't just embed it [spirituality] and hope that a batch of disparate, professionals from accounting, management, finance, and economics are just going to get it. They are going to know how it links to what their speciality is, or what is not going to work.

6.13.4 The Perceived Value of Spirituality in the University

Talking about the challenges of bringing spirituality into the university, Shelley stated, "Universities are secular institutions, and any whiff of trying to impose a particular theological perspective would be resisted by universities." This view

seems to arise from negativity towards the religious underpinnings of spirituality. Xavier added, "people feel somehow threatened by spirituality. It is confronting to experience that sort of connectedness in the workplace, [which] can be confronting to people." Talking about management, he added,

We teach people to make instrumental judgements about values, rather than human value-laden judgements about values. [...] We live in an ending of an age. The age is the ending of modernity, the ending of instrumentality, the ending of growth and a real connection with what it means to be an ecological civilisation, [...] because it requires a spiritual management, a thorough-going appreciation of ourselves, and our relation—not just to other human beings—but to all things.

Xavier felt that while these are the needs of the time, universities are structured in a way that encourages "instrumentality which will lead to a non-spiritual approach to the world as they operate in it, as managers." He and Toby asserted that universities sell their courses to students and give them a degree in exchange. A course or unit on spirituality may not generate the money like other courses and units which may lead universities to resist.

Uri noted that the course he was teaching had a lot of material which would not leave sufficient time to teach concepts like spirituality and so its inclusion would be resisted. Toby was of the opinion that a unit on spirituality would have outcomes like having a "spiritual life" with a "good moral compass, ethics and values", which are hard to measure and would turn off a lot of academics.

6.14 Comparing FoE and TSBE

Table 6.7 demonstrates the challenges to teaching spirituality identified by the participants from FoE and TSBE. All academics were of the opinion that the lack of an academic definition of spirituality makes it challenging to teach the concept in higher education. Two participants from FoE and most from TSBE discussed the separation of church and state and its implications. More academics in TSBE than in FoE believed that academics lacked the skillsets to teach spirituality, and would require training, which could be another challenge. Two academics in FoE also discussed attitudinal issues that academics have that could create challenges when incorporating spirituality in the higher education curriculum, while no one from TSBE talked about it. Academics in both faculties discussed various ways universities could resist teaching spirituality within their faculties. Only one academic from FoE mentioned that that lack of diversity may render it difficult to incorporate spirituality in teacher education.

Table 6.7

FoE and TSBE Academics' viewpoints on challenges with teaching spirituality

Subthemes	FoE	TSBE	TOTAL
Defining spirituality	9	10	19
Separation of church and state	2	9	11
Academics' attitudes	6	5	11
Perceived value of spirituality in the university	2	5	7
Not a diverse student cohort	1	0	1

6.15 Discussion on Academics' Viewpoints about Challenges with Teaching Spirituality in Higher Education

All 19 participating academics in this study found defining spirituality challenging, and were of the opinion that, without a clear definition, it would be impossible to teach spirituality within higher education. This reflects the literature: Gibson (2014) explains that spirituality is a complicated and controversial human phenomenon because of the various meanings people associate with it. While all participants of this study thought of religion as soon as the word “spirituality” was mentioned, some participants believed that the complexity or multiple meanings associated with spirituality, and its intangible nature, could be the reason why academics avoid talking about it. These complexities were perceived as making it challenging to teach spirituality. The literature (e.g., Frisdiántara & Sahertian, 2012) acknowledges that it is challenging to develop a general applicable definition.

The literature also reveals that people are generally afraid to talk about spirituality in the workplace and that educators are discouraged by their peers to do so (Mahadevan, 2013; McLean, 1994; Neal, 2008). One of the reasons for this could be the separation of the church and the state, and the secularisation of education (Allison & Broadus, 2009). Academics are expected to keep their personal and professional identities separate in the workplace, as this could lead to unfavourable consequences as identified by Crossman (2015a, p. 1; see also section 2.5.2). Although no evidence is found to support this in real outcomes, fear of these consequences still seems to exist within the academics interviewed for this study.

Uncertainty about teaching spirituality in higher education also appears to be due to the notion of the separation of church and the state, especially as all academics connected spirituality with religion in some ways. A few academics asserted that, while universities are secular institutions, incorporating spirituality within the curriculum officially could be challenging. The Australian constitution, Chapter 5 number 116 states:

Commonwealth not to legislate in respect of religion:

The Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion, or for imposing any religious observance, or for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Commonwealth. (Australian Government Solicitor, 2010, p. 10)

This suggests that the Australian constitution allows freedom for individuals to choose religion, without government imposition in any way. King (2007) clarifies that the separation of church and state means that the state does not give preference to any religion, and there is no interference by the government or individuals in each other's affairs in this matter. While the first amendment of the US constitution discusses the separation of church and state specifically (Magaldi-Dopman & Park-Taylor, 2014), there is no evidence of the existence of any such Australian document that separates the church and state (Fisher, 2012).

Participants from both faculties also believed that academics' attitudes could create challenges to including spirituality within higher education. Some participants from FoE felt that academics had issues such as power, arrogance, fear, and selfishness, and suggested that the lack of training on spirituality would create challenges for it to be taught in teacher education. Participants from TSBE also

discussed academics' fear of including a new concept like spirituality, mainly due to the lack of skillsets to teach it. Horner and Tucker (2013) suggest that the current age of globalisation requires academics to provide their students with educational experiences around spirituality, currently lacking in higher education. Perhaps training academics in spirituality may enable them to engage their students with their own spirituality and connect with others (Palmer, 2003). Training in this area would certainly help academics overcome this challenge, but with the lack of time due to their workload may discourage academics from additional training and doing the preparation necessary to teach new material.

Another challenge discussed by the participants from both faculties was the resistance that could come from academics within universities. Some participants believed that academics were fearful of teaching spirituality within the university due to its association with religion, while others perceived that spirituality was irrelevant to their teaching unit and would add extra load to their teaching, or that students may not be interested in studying spirituality. These academics also felt that they may lose their jobs or face litigation if they teach spirituality, being associated with religion, which seems an unfounded fear. McSherry (2000) suggests that academics are sometimes influenced by the political, economic, and managerial factors within their institutions, which creates fear of adverse consequences.

Bell-Ellis, Jones, Longstreth, and Neal (2015) conducted a study on spirituality, with academics in higher education, and discovered that “in an educational and/or research organization, many of the most influential members view religiosity and/or spirituality as a threat to the conduct of their work and the integrity of their work in general” (p. 171). They argued that academics' spirituality connects them to the institution, which makes spirituality as relevant to the workplace as

knowledge. Hertz and Friedman (2015) are of the opinion that academics should stop fearing the inclusion of spirituality in higher education, as there is no conflict between them. They assert that “students are very idealistic and impressionable and are therefore a good target audience to absorb the subject of spirituality” (p. 21). It may be assumed that teaching students about spirituality and spiritual values could help them develop into ethical and more productive professionals within the workplace.

One participant in FoE highlighted that the student cohort in the FoE is not diverse which may be a challenge to teach spirituality. Gibson (2014) explains spirituality can be taught in any environment that demonstrates “flexibility, creativity, newness, engagement, and reflectiveness” (p.521), and students and teachers find meaning in their shared stories, and so can be taught in less diverse classrooms.

6.16 Conclusion

The second research question examined how academics viewed spirituality’s inclusion in higher education and whether or not it would have any impact on the development of students’ professional identities. This chapter was focused on how academics from both faculties perceived the role spirituality could play in developing their students’ professional identities and the methodologies they could use to teach the concept. Academics also discussed the challenges they perceived they could face when teaching spirituality.

As discussed in previous chapters, spirituality is a challenging concept to define academically, yet it is included within higher education within a number of countries, including Australia. In this study, most academics from FoE and TSBE seemed to be in favour of including spirituality in the higher education curriculum, both directly as a unit and indirectly, within the hidden curriculum. Some academics

also felt that it was already part of the hidden curriculum, and concepts associated with spirituality were already being taught indirectly, without using the term. A few academics in FoE were teaching spiritual wellbeing, and some in TSBE taught ethics and servant leadership, and felt these were very close to spirituality.

These academics used or suggested using a number of student-centred pedagogies for teaching their students, such as discussions and debates, reflective practice, case studies, storytelling, and individual exploration and experience. Literature revealed that these methods were appropriate for teaching spirituality, but would require some additional factors, such as a safe and non-judgemental space for students to be able to voice their opinions fearlessly, but with respect, and using an all-inclusive language, in small group settings.

The teaching of spirituality is a complex activity which is still being researched and to date no significant evidence has been found concerning its impact on the development of the professional identities of higher education students. Academics in this study speculated that spirituality could have a positive influence on the development of education and business students' professional identities, and suggested that, being an ongoing process, these will develop over time. Most academics discussed helping their students become professionals, and their expectations of them, but did not address the concept of professional identities and spirituality directly, and seemed to be discussing professionalism. The reason for this could be that professional identity is a relatively new concept that is very complex (Weiner & Torres, 2016), and most academics are still unaware of it, especially in business education.

Academics also discussed the challenges around the teaching of spirituality within higher education. The most important issue highlighted by all academics was

the lack of an academic definition of spirituality. Other challenges included the academics' fear, power, selfishness, and lack of training. Additionally, the misconception of the separation of the church and state was highlighted by a few academics, some of whom felt that this could be one reason why universities may resist its inclusion within their curricula.

There were some inconsistencies in the data from the academics which will be discussed in Section 7.7 in more detail. One interesting discovery was that at the beginning of the interview process, all academics associated spirituality with religion, irrespective of their religious or secular backgrounds, which made it challenging for them to define spirituality academically. Another discovery was that some academics seemed resistant to teach spirituality in higher education, yet they made suggestions about teaching it effectively. These and other contradictory statements made data analysis for this study challenging, especially as it seemed that most academics were unclear of their stance about spirituality, its inclusion in the curriculum, teaching it, and its impact on students' professional identity development.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 presented the data analysis of this study and identified some key themes and subthemes highlighted by the academics. The next chapter concludes this study by presenting the findings, recommendations and implications for future study.

Chapter 7

Conclusions, Implications, and Future Research

7.1 Introduction

Since the late twentieth century, there has been considerable research on the concept of spirituality, in a wide range of areas including education. This study has continued these endeavours, with a focus on higher education, focusing on a regional university in Australia. Using a qualitative approach, this exploratory multiple case study explored how academics from two faculties—the Faculty of Education (FoE), and the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE)—understand the concept of spirituality and examined their viewpoints on the incorporation of spirituality within higher education, and its impact on the development of their students' professional identities. This chapter identifies the significance of this study, summarises the findings, and discusses the implications for education and future research.

Problematic events stemming from poor ethical actions occurring in business have compelled people to search for positive approaches that might prevent such issues in the future. The search for meaning and connection in life and work, without necessarily requiring the influence of organised religion, led to the emergence of spirituality as a separate concept. It has, however, proved challenging to define, mainly because of its personal nature, and because it allows many different viewpoints rather than the generally well-defined theology of any specific religion. Despite the lack of definition, universities around the world have incorporated spirituality within the curricula in the areas of education, business, nursing and medical sciences (Neal 2008; Harris & Crossman, 2005), and numerous studies have been conducted in the area of spirituality in higher education (De Souza, 2016; Pawar, 2009). Nevertheless, an academic definition of spirituality that is understood by all stakeholders—students, academics, and society in general—has not been developed.

In Australia, there has been little significant and current research around spirituality in higher education, and this study attempts to fill some of this gap. Academics from FoE and TSBE volunteered for one-on-one interviews to find out about their views on spirituality, its teaching in higher education, and its potential impact on students. The key findings of this study and their implications are discussed in the next sections.

7.2 Finding 1: Defining Spirituality

The first research question concerned how academics in the Faculty of Education and the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics understand the concept of spirituality. Chapter 4 presented the detailed analysis of the results, and here some further conclusions will be drawn.

The academics in the study viewed spirituality in different ways, yet the common understanding of all 19 participants was that spirituality is associated with religion in one way or another. Some felt that spirituality is beyond reason, irrational, unexplainable, childlike, immeasurable, and thus intangible. Others associated it with concepts like ethics, values, morals, an holistic way of life, negative spirituality, cultural spirituality, organisational spirituality, and spiritual wellbeing. These academics also discussed religious spirituality and secular spirituality.

7.2.1 Religious versus Secular Spirituality

This study started with the view that spirituality is a concept that could be both religious and secular in nature as discussed in literature, and thus spirituality and religion may have distinct identities. Tisdell (2008) explains the difference between the two: spirituality is an individual's personal experience with what he/she considers sanctified and can be experienced everywhere, while religion is a practice of rituals and rites, and has specific codes of conduct of a faith-based community. Although the 19 participants in this study had religious, agnostic, or atheist backgrounds, they all stated that the first thought that came to their mind when talking about spirituality is that it is associated with religion. However, as the interviews progressed most participants also talked about other concepts such as ethics, values, and respect, as being associated with spirituality and which may be considered separate from religion.

The participants who were religious based their idea of spirituality on their Christian faith, while those who were agnostic based their spirituality on worldviews common in different religions, but with a strong affinity to Christianity, and some with Buddhism. The atheist participants also viewed spirituality as religion, and were

quite opposed to the view that spirituality could be separated from religion, and initially felt challenged to talk about it.

The interesting thing during these interviews was that most participants did not address their understanding of spirituality at the beginning, but as they explored their own understanding, and voiced their thinking, they were able to identify or at least explore their perceptions of spirituality. One of the reasons for this could be that these academics had never thought of or even discussed spirituality as they believed it to be a purely religious concept and, as a result, assumed that it was not allowed in the university. Despite being sent the interview questions in advance, some academics still found defining spirituality a challenge, and were expecting to be provided with a definition. The study's deliberate choice not to give a definition appeared to generate diverse viewpoints about spirituality as participants reflected on their understanding of the concept. One academic said,

For me, when people say spirituality, it is about religion. That's the first thing that comes to my mind is religion. However, if you think about it, and discuss it with little bit more detail, religion is an aspect, and therefore spirituality can be encompassing of many other different things. I think a lot of people think first off, they go, "oh, you're talking about religion," or it can get confusing.

An interesting viewpoint of academics having religious backgrounds was that spirituality has to do with belief systems and God, but those without faith are also spiritual. Some of these academics also challenged the concept of secular spirituality and felt that people had selected the concepts that suited them the most from religion.

Many participants, especially in TSBE, discussed the Golden Rule, *do unto others as they would have them do unto you*, a concept derived from religion which

some talked about in secular terms as well. According to Crossman (2003), “The concept of secular spirituality has a generalizable and trans-religious quality, emphasising obvious commonalities amongst major religions without undue preference” (p. 505). Participants from both faculties discussed secular spirituality, ascribing it to being a good person, with ethical and moral values that are respectful to all, but without any association with religion. Some also talked about “wonderment and awe” of the universe and “nature”, while others talked about the “higher self” and “meditation”. “Music” was also viewed as being spiritual with a meditative effect. While some participants also talked about Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs theory as reflecting secular spirituality, some also discussed the concepts of analysis, synthesis, and independent investigation of the truth. Most of the concepts discussed by academics in terms of secular spirituality—like ethics, morals, values, connection, diversity—have emerged out of religion. The only difference seems to be that there are practices and rituals ascribed to religious belief systems. Hence, it could be assumed that concepts used within secular spirituality are aligned with religious views of spirituality, but are not ascribed to any one particular denomination. Only one participant felt spirituality did not exist and that believing in it was childish, yet she later expressed that it could be taught.

7.2.2 Implications from this Study

Spirituality, as a concept in its own right, has only recently emerged from religion. Although most recent literature separates the two, the reality of the data gathered from the academics in FoE and TSBE is that spirituality is still seen as associated with religion. Religious participants argued that almost all the concepts associated with spirituality are associated with their religious beliefs. The only thing

they feel that secular spirituality does not ascribe to are the religious practices and rituals, and they see spirituality as broader in scope.

This study revealed that although some academics stated that they did not know spirituality outside the context of religion, as they reflected they revealed an awareness of it and associated spirituality with things that give them meaning and purpose and is about doing the right thing ethically. Academics are considered amongst society's most knowledgeable people (Neal, 2008), yet some felt uncomfortable talking about spirituality and acknowledged their lack of knowledge of the concept. Although all academics had volunteered for this study knowing its focus on spirituality and were provided with the interview schedule in case they needed to prepare themselves, many struggled to discuss their understanding of spirituality. Indeed, most participants assumed that this study was about religious spirituality, and the atheist and agnostic participants initially felt that spirituality and religion are used interchangeably.

This exploration of academics' understanding of spirituality suggests a need for an academic definition for spirituality that is succinct, clear, all-inclusive and adaptable to suit the increasing diversity within educational and work environments. This would allow academics to teach the concept more effectively and enable students to identify their own spirituality within the framework of this academic definition.

7.2.3 Implications for Future Study

This study did not attempt to define spirituality, nor was a definition provided to academics to explore what each one of them felt spirituality was. It is suggested that, in a future study, academics could be provided with a clear definition developed

from the literature. This would allow academics to address that specific definition and examine their personal understanding of spirituality in light of the definition provided. Nevertheless, the open-ended approach used in this study has provided useful insights into the complexity of personal views of what may not yet be a well-defined concept.

7.3 Finding 2: Incorporating Spirituality in Higher Education

The second research question (RQ2) explored the way academics perceived the inclusion of spirituality within teacher and business curricula, the way it could be taught, and its impact on the professional identities of their students. It examined influences on curricula, and why spirituality might be important for higher education students. An intriguing finding of this study was that while there were more religious academics in FoE, it was the academics from TSBE who seemed more interested in incorporating the concept of spirituality within their curricula.

7.3.1 Role of Government Documents

The study considered whether there are government documents that address spirituality in education. The *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, 2008* (MDEGYA) (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD), 2009), the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2012, 2013, 2015), and the Health and Physical Education Curriculum, Tasmania (DET) (2008) address the need to develop school students' spiritual wellbeing or spirituality, as part of contemporary education in Australia.

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) (Australian Qualifications Framework Council, 2013) does not use the terms spiritual wellbeing or spirituality, in discussing generic attributes for university graduates, but it does discuss concepts associated with spirituality, such as personal and people skills. They suggest that these skills involve the ability to communicate with people, make decisions, and solve problems, with personal integrity.

Most academics in FoE knew about government policy documents like MEDGYA, while few knew that one part of the Tasmanian school curriculum addresses spirituality. Those from the TSBE were unaware of these documents entirely, probably because FoE's focus on teacher education requires knowledge of government education policies and their objectives, while the TSBE focuses on developing business professionals. Academics in both faculties were critical of the undefined use of the term spirituality in these documents, believing that it was included for political or religious reasons. This could have been because the government at the time the documents were developed had a strong focus on including religion within school education both implicitly and explicitly, by providing funding to schools for a National chaplaincy program (Barker, 2015).

During the interview process, it was discovered that the Faculty of Education has been teaching two units on "Health and Physical Education" and "Social and Emotional Learning" that address "spiritual health and wellbeing". These units were developed in response to the *Health and Wellbeing Curriculum for Schools* document, developed by the Department of Education, Tasmania in 2008 (DET, 2008). Except for the two academics who taught the unit, no one else discussed these units. It seems that the other academics in FoE were unaware of the inclusion of spirituality in those units.

7.3.2 A Curriculum with Spirituality

Literature reveals that there seems to be a positive impact of teaching spirituality in higher education (Palmer, 2003; Lindholm & Astin, 2008; Tisdell, 2008; Pargament, 2013). , such as “improving students’ intellectual curiosity, interpersonal skills, and maturational development” (Lindholm & Astin, 2008, p. 199) and helping shape an individual’s personality (Palmer, 2003; Pargament, 2013). As a result, a number of universities in countries like USA, UK, China, and India have incorporated the concept of spirituality within their higher education curricula, but the same trend has not been seen within Australia (Harris & Crossman, 2005). Currently, only two universities in Australia seem to offer units on spirituality, one of which is associated with religion at the University of Newcastle, while the other is at the University of Tasmania offered in the area of humanities. At the University of Tasmania, the concept of spiritual wellbeing is taught within teacher education, while spirituality in business receives limited coverage as part of the units called “organisational behaviour” and “ethics”. Other than these, no evidence was found that spirituality is part of higher education within Australia. This may reflect Australia’s generally secular outlook, and a reluctance to address a concept many ascribe to religion. According to Purpel (1989), some universities include spiritual concepts under the guise of ethics, morals, and values, while others teach it as part of the hidden curriculum, with academics teaching *with* spirituality, their values, and understanding of human relationships. “Spirituality” seems to be challenging within the higher education curriculum, and this was evidenced in one academic’s response.

I suspect that people are challenged by the idea of spirituality; I’m struggling to define it myself. It’s a challenging concept for anyone particularly, I think, with

students. They would be challenged by that concept if it was presented to them directly. And indirectly we talk about students; the graduate student attributes that talk about providing students with global awareness, a sense of social responsibility, building ethical decision-making practices, those sorts of things. It's all covered in there. [...] It doesn't get into the nitty-gritty of what I consider to be spirituality.

This raises the question whether spirituality should be taught as a concept within higher education or whether it is already present, but in the hidden curriculum. Some academics seemed to state that they taught concepts they believe were associated with spirituality, using their own spirituality, with the hope that the students would pick up on it. These concepts included ethics, awareness, diversity, decision-making, holistic education, servant leadership, and the *Golden Rule*.

Most academics within the FoE were aware of the inclusion of spirituality within the curriculum, and documents like the Melbourne Declaration (DEECD, 2009), The Australian curriculum (ACARA, 2015), and the Health and Physical Education (DET, 2008) curriculum for schools, and were being taught within teacher education, as part of higher education. These academics also advocated the inclusion of spirituality within higher education, and felt that some of the concepts were being taught such as spiritual wellbeing. Some of these academics also felt that they modelled their spirituality for students to pick up as they graduate, which they felt was teaching with spirituality.

Most participants in FoE and TSBE were in favour of including spirituality within the higher education curriculum, while a few opposed it. Some academics were of the opinion that the inclusion of spirituality would be irrelevant to the units they taught, while others felt that a requirement to include spirituality might become

prescriptive, with only a specific viewpoint, which may not be appropriate for diverse student cohorts. Some academics felt that they may not be comfortable teaching spirituality, mainly because they lacked an understanding of the concept themselves.

One academic said, “I believe that spirituality should just be embedded throughout the curriculum. It should just be there, it should be an inherent part as in the Melbourne declaration. It should be an inherent part of all that we teach.” To achieve this, universities would need to review their mission and vision of the type of graduates they want to produce and explore the role spirituality could play to achieve that vision. This would also require academics to identify what aspects of spirituality could be incorporated, just like spiritual wellbeing has been added to the “Health and Physical Wellbeing” and “Social and Emotional Learning” units at the University of Tasmania. However, some academics argued that unless there is a policy mandated by the university, spirituality cannot be included in the curriculum. Others believed that if there is a policy to teach spirituality, then all academics would teach the concept only for the sake of compliance with policy and spirituality would lose its value.

While some academics suggested embedding spirituality throughout the curriculum, others felt a dedicated unit with spirituality would be better, and some felt that spirituality and concepts they believed are associated with spirituality were already included in the curriculum. It seems that academics are not sure about what they mean by spirituality and as such seem confused about its incorporation within their respective curricula. Interestingly, after their interviews were officially over, a few academics, who opposed the inclusion of spirituality in their curricula, suggested that they felt that spirituality could be beneficial for their students, but they were wary of its religious association.

Some participants in both faculties viewed spirituality as a concept that cannot be added to the written curriculum, but could be taught in class implicitly, perhaps making it part of the hidden curriculum (see Priestley, 1997; Purpel, 1989). Other academics felt that embedding spirituality into the university's culture, instead of adding it to the curriculum, would be more beneficial. These academics spoke of experiences at their previous workplaces, before they became academics, where the organisation had addressed spirituality through various activities that enable them to connect to themselves, their workplace, and others. This allowed the teaching of spiritual values without using the term "spirituality".

7.3.3 Potential Units for Teacher Education and Business

Although some academics in FoE felt that the incorporation of spirituality in the teacher education curriculum is not required, they suggested that building it into some units could be useful. They suggested that a unit which includes spirituality needs to be purposeful, and broader in scope than religion, and include aspects of respect, knowledge of the transcendent and the irrational, possibilities of personal growth and development, and awe and wonder. Some academics also felt that such a unit should also empower students to understand the different religious practices that pre-service teachers might encounter when they go to schools to teach. They suggested units like "spirituality and religion", "spirituality and decision-making", "spiritual wellbeing", and "outdoor education." It seems interesting that academics in FoE suggested these units to be taught within teacher education as most of these concepts associated with spirituality, such as spiritual wellbeing, ethics, and values are already being taught without using the term spirituality.

A new unit on “spirituality and religion” was also suggested by some academics to familiarise pre-service teachers with different religious and spiritual practices, especially with the increasing diversity among school students. This suggestion is very similar to my experience as a school student in Europe and later at university as a pre-service teacher (see section 1.9). In both cases, students were asked to share their belief systems, rituals, and practices. These enabled us to identify similarities and differences among practices, and understand the viewpoints on religion and spirituality at an intimate level, building trust and collegiality amongst the students

One participant felt that the potential to teach spirituality would only be possible in a religious sense, for a specific cohort who would like to teach in Christian schools. This seems to be a viable option given the fact that the University of Tasmania is a single, regional university, and does not currently offer any such course. However, offering an economically viable course with specific religious content on spirituality at this university would perhaps also be challenging, given the range of options already available within other religious institutions and universities within Australia.

Opinions about a unit addressing spirituality were very different in TSBE, where the academics were more concerned about procedural matters than the content itself. As discussed in 5.10.2, some academics believed that the unit outlines at the University of Tasmania were “written agreements between the university and the students” that state the expectations of both parties, and, as such, the learning outcomes need to be clear and measurable. They felt that this may not be possible given the subjective nature of spirituality. These academics argued that a unit about spirituality would require a clear academic definition of spirituality that is

dissociated from religion and have measurable assessment tasks. A few academics in TSBE felt that there was no need for assessing spirituality; instead students could be given credit points for taking the course. Most academics in TSBE felt that a unit about spirituality should be designed in a way that it attracts fee paying students, to make it more viable, and should be aligned with the university's graduate attributes. Some units suggested by the academics in TSBE were on "spirituality", "spirituality and ethics", "servant leadership", "accounting and spirituality", "giving voice to values", and "spirituality and decision-making". One academic also felt that a unit like "spirituality, wisdom and aesthetics", which was offered at the time at another university, could be modified and taught at TSBE. Just like FoE, some of these topics are already being taught as units or as part of units in TSBE, such as ethics, servant leadership, giving voice to values, and decision-making, where they may well be taught with an underpinning of spirituality without actually using the term. One academic felt that a unit called "spirituality" could be too large and vague to teach, and may require an underpinning of various religious practices and belief systems. It may be feasible to add spirituality as a component in the unit "philosophy of management", currently taught at the undergraduate level at TSBE. It seems that academics believe that there is room for units about or including spirituality in the higher education curriculum, but they feel that their effectiveness requires academics to be motivated enough to not only develop such a unit, but to ensure successful implementation.

7.3.4 Implications from this Study

While the Australian government produces curricular and educational documents like the MDEGYA (DEECD, 2009), the H&PE (DET, 2008), and the

Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2015), it needs to define spirituality clearly and in a way that is all-inclusive. It might require government educational agencies to research how other countries define the term in educational documents. The definition would need to include indigenous, multicultural, and religious worldviews to cater to the diverse student population. Interestingly, the 1999 New Zealand *Health and Physical Education* curriculum document (Fraser, 2007) defines spiritual wellbeing in a way that may be useful academically, and incorporating religious and non-religious concepts:

Spiritual wellbeing [is defined] as “the values and beliefs that determine the way people live, the search for meaning and purpose in life, and personal identity and self-awareness” (for some individuals and communities spiritual wellbeing is linked to a particular religion; for others, it is not). (p. 291)

Perhaps this definition could be included in future documents by the government; however, this definition seems to define spirituality rather than spiritual wellbeing. Similarly, the *Australian Qualifications Framework* (AQFC, 2013), that addresses the skills and abilities required at specific levels of study within Australia, has objectives that include concepts associated with spirituality, as discussed in this study by academics and the literature. Their objectives include developing competencies that would enable students to interact with people respectfully and with integrity. The *AQF* is flexible and “accommodates the diversity of purposes of Australian education and training” (AQFC, 2013, p. 8).

The assumption that academics hold regarding the separation of the church and state, and the secular nature of higher education, restricts the use of the term spirituality in higher education. The reason for this is that spirituality is still

associated with religion in academic circles, as evidenced by the academics in this study.

The importance of teaching spirituality in higher education is evidenced in literature and many universities globally have already developed courses and units that teach the concept (Frohlich, 2001; Groen, 2008; Hogan, 2009). Universities in Australia, including the University of Tasmania, have also developed units or included concepts related to spirituality such as spiritual wellbeing (see 5.8.2), and giving voice to values (see 5.9.2). However, not many academics are aware of these inclusions which could be because there is no open discussion about these units or that they are taboo (Crossman, 2003), and are taught only out of need.

Academics in FoE and TSBE felt that there is room for spirituality in the curriculum but without an understanding of its importance at the university, it would be impossible to incorporate spirituality in higher education. This idea seems incongruous in the sense that universities allow academics to research and integrate units into the curriculum, and if most academics feel there is room for incorporating spirituality, and is important, then a unit could be developed which is intellectually rigorous may be integrated into the university.

The perception, held by some academics, that there is a separation of church and state, or that university management would not look favourably upon “spirituality” as a focus of study, appears to have resulted in doubts about whether spirituality could be part of the higher education curriculum. There was a lack of awareness about the fact that spirituality is being taught, not only in other countries and institutions, but within the University of Tasmania.

Finally, some academics appeared to have concerns about how rigorous and assessable a unit on spirituality could be. These factors, too, may have contributed to

the limited engagement with the idea of incorporating spirituality in higher education, even though many of the academics saw scope for including associated concepts. It is likely that the impetus for including spirituality in higher education will occur only if there is a clear purpose, a rigorous program of study, and a viable market.

7.3.5 Implications for Future Study

If future policy documents prepared by the government are to include spirituality, then they need to provide an academic definition of the term. This would enable educational institutions to teach the concept more effectively and allow research to be conducted to prove the efficacy of teaching spirituality at both the school and higher education levels. Perhaps the government higher education agencies would also acknowledge the role education has to play in individual's spiritual development.

Universities in Australia could use the examples of units on spirituality extant elsewhere as springboards for incorporating spirituality within their curricula. Academics could then develop dedicated units or embed spirituality within the higher education curricula as suited to the Australian context. As suggested by literature (e.g., Rockenbach & Mayhew, 2013) and a few academics, a culture that includes spirituality could be developed within universities, where students' spiritual wellbeing is developed and enhanced through various activities and programs.

7.4 Finding 3: Challenges Associated with Incorporating Spirituality in Higher Education

There are many challenges associated with teaching spirituality in higher education. Some of these were identified within literature and by the academics in both faculties.

7.4.1 A Definition of Spirituality

The main challenge identified in literature is the difficulty of having an objective definition of spirituality (Rockenbach et al., 2015). Sections 2.4, 6.11, and 6.12 in this study discuss the challenges of defining spirituality within literature and by academics from both faculties. The main issue with the concept of spirituality appears to be its association with religion and the many different meanings associated with it. There are many academic definitions available in literature, as demonstrated in section 2; however, almost all of them are either contested or debated, and as the data in this study demonstrated, academics themselves lack a clear conceptualisation of spirituality. Given the nature of spirituality, developing a consensual academic definition of the concept is academically challenging.

7.4.2 Separation of Church and State

Unlike the first amendment in the American Constitution, that discusses the separation of the church and state, the Australian Constitution, does not clearly separate the two. This is evidenced in the Australian Constitution, Chapter 5, number 116 as discussed in section 2.5.2, which suggests that the Australian government does not subscribe to any particular religion, but gives a freedom of choice to those in office to practice their religion, without imposing their beliefs on others and allowing

others to practice their religion freely. Allison and Broadus (2009) believe that the separation of the church and the state in the US resulted in the secularization of education, with the expectation that academics would keep their personal beliefs outside their professional lives. However, Fisher (2012, p. 5) cites Wallace (2005), stating “unlike the USA, Australia does not have a legally entrenched principle or even vague set of conventions of the separation of church and state”. Nonetheless, it seems that most government educational institutions believe in this separation (Natsis, 2015) and this separation is viewed by the academics in FoE and TSBE as a challenge to incorporating spirituality in higher education.

Academics in this study seemed ill-informed about the separation of the church and state within Australia. At the least, they felt wary of talking about the concept of spirituality but were comfortable with concepts associated with it within academic circles. While most participants believed that Australia is a secular country, its Christian-dominated background seems to influence many documents, including MDEGYA. This explains why so many academics associate spirituality with religion, and why they may use the terms interchangeably. Some academics felt that incorporating spirituality within higher education would be influenced by certain religious practices, and may create conflict within the classroom.

The number of religious or faith-based non-government schools in Australia and the inclusion of spirituality, without a clear definition, in government documents is evidence of the freedom of religious practice within educational institutions. These schools employ teachers from different backgrounds and student cohorts are also much diverse. These contradict the academics’ views on the separation of the church and state, and the potential of spirituality creating conflict during teaching does not

seem plausible, given that students come to higher education from religious institutions as well.

7.4.3 Academics' Attitudes

One of the interesting findings from the data was the way some academics perceived other academics within the university. These academics felt that to teach spirituality within higher education would require a change in the attitudes of some fellow academics if they are to teach the concept. One academic stated that “when you are talking to academics, you are also then confronted with their own arrogance,” which she felt means that they need to “intellectualise” everything that needs to be taught. She felt that this would make teaching spirituality in higher education impossible, mainly because most academics have a “façade” that requires them to be an intellectual at all times. This arrogance or façade could be a reason why academics refrain from discussing spirituality, because they may be unaware of its separation from religion, and believe that it cannot be intellectualised, or rationalised. Some academics may also be strongly associated with a particular view of spirituality, which may create an uncomfortable situation with colleagues (McLaughlin, 2005).

A few participants felt some academics are “very selfish” and “power hungry”, and consider themselves experts in certain areas. They were of the view that these academics may feel the incorporation of spirituality as irrelevant, especially if they lack understanding of the concept, and the skillsets required to teach it. These inadequacies would require a change in attitude, to not feel threatened by a concept very different from their areas of expertise. Literature reveals that one of the issues in teaching spirituality in higher education is lack of skills and training to teach it (McLaughlin, 2005; Nelms, 2008).

Despite the fact that all the participating academics volunteered for this study, some seemed fearful of responding to the first interview question (see Table 3.1) about spirituality, and expected a definition for this study so that they could talk about it. This fear resulted in three participants dropping out of the study as discussed in Chapter 3. Most participants felt that talking about spirituality was like talking about religion or concepts from religion, and two feared that they could be fired or face legal action by the university. The non-religious participants feared being perceived as religious, and thus avoided talking about spirituality.

Attitudes like arrogance, selfishness, need for power, and fear are issues that are a challenge to incorporate spirituality within higher education. What is interesting is that these attitudes were identified by a few academics, who talked about other academics and not themselves, which may also be them projecting their own attitudes on others.

7.4.4 Perception of Resistance by Universities

Some academics in both faculties perceived that universities in Australia would resist the inclusion of spirituality within their curricula. They felt that spirituality was irrelevant to their teaching unit, as students may not be interested to study this concept. Universities might therefore resist the inclusion of spirituality in higher education. Some academics felt that university courses already involve teaching a lot of content, especially to meet the requirements of different professional bodies, and as such there may not be sufficient room to add spirituality within the higher education curricula. In contrast, many academics stated that there is room for spirituality in the higher education curriculum but it requires universities to mandate it. Perhaps, academics were unsure of whether or not spirituality has a place within

higher education and as such considered the concept a challenge to add it to their curricula.

7.4.5 Implications from this Study

The challenges identified by the academics from both faculties and literature are similar. Designing a curriculum that incorporates spirituality would need to address these challenges. There was a unanimous agreement amongst all academics that the lack of an academic definition that caters to both religious and secular individuals is the greatest challenge to incorporating spirituality in higher education. Numerous attempts to define spirituality have been found (see section 2.4), yet a consensus on what the term could mean academically is still required.

Within Australia, Crossman (2003) explored the concept of secular spirituality in higher education, which could include religious ideas, but she was unable to develop a clear academic definition of spirituality, acknowledging its subjectivity within individual, religious, and cultural contexts. While it is arguable that a definition would have provided the academics in this study with a base to discuss views on spirituality academically, this carried with it the risk that they would be sidetracked from considering their own use of spirituality as they saw it in their own terms in their own teaching.

Most academics in both faculties believed that there was a separation of the church and state, yet no document within Australia was found that states this. In fact, the Australian constitution allows its people the freedom to practice their religion without interference from the state, which is evidenced with the number of privately owned religious educational institutions, within the country. Additionally, educational documents by the governments' use of the term "spiritual" (ACARA, 2015), and

“spiritual wellbeing” (DET, 2008; DEECD, 2008) without providing an academic definition suggests the allowance of using spirituality as interpreted locally by educational institutions, religious or secular. Some academics felt concerned about the idea of teaching spirituality, because of their perception of the secular nature of higher education institutions.

With the ever-changing nature of the workforce and organisational cultures, people are searching for meaning in the workplace, and looking towards universities to develop professionals with the abilities to provide meaning and purpose to their employees. This demand requires universities to consider including the concept within their curricula. To achieve this, academics would need to be convinced of the importance of spirituality and understand its role in the diversity of student cohorts.

What was interesting in this study was that during the interviews, as academics reflected on their curricula and teaching, they realised that they were already teaching concepts they felt were associated with spirituality. Some academics felt that their spirituality helped them teach their units and that spirituality could be taught directly within the curriculum as well. Some academics also felt that other academics and universities may resist the incorporation of spirituality within higher education due to spirituality’s association with religion, and the academic’s personal attitudes towards the inclusion of the concept. Perhaps if a dialogue is started on the importance of spirituality, some of these issues may come to light in a more open way than just this study.

7.4.6 Implications for Future Study

The lack of a consensual and accepted academic definition of spirituality seems to be the main challenge to incorporating spirituality within higher education.

A meta-review of definitions in the literature might allow the development of an academic definition of spirituality, but it would involve reconciling some diverse descriptions to capture the key characteristics that are not contestable.

A unit with spirituality would require testing within the two faculties in this study at the University of Tasmania. Perhaps an action-based research program could be conducted, by developing a unit on spirituality taking into account faculty requirements, and volunteer academics from the FoE and the TSBE, could implement and test it. Academics teaching those units could be provided training to deliver such a unit, with skills and abilities to manage the content and issues that may arise during teaching spirituality. The action-based research model would allow for modification of the unit after each implementation of teaching it, allowing investigation of the challenges associated with teaching spirituality and its viability within higher education.

7.5 Finding 4: Pedagogical Approaches to Teaching Spirituality

There were several pedagogical approaches discussed in the literature that could be used to teach spirituality within the higher education classroom. Most were already used by academics in FoE and TSBE to teach other topics.

While an understanding of spirituality was the foremost requirement for teaching it (Gibson, 2014), academics felt that embodying spirituality was important as it influenced their pedagogy. Some academics shared their experiences of how they embodied their spirituality and used it to teach their units, which may require discussing concepts associated with spirituality (see section 2.4, 2.12). They believed

that teaching spirituality as a unit or a concept would also require use of their own spirituality.

Academics also discussed the importance of creating a safe environment for students to explore the concepts within spirituality, due to the possibility of sensitive issues. Modern pedagogical approaches to teaching advocate student-centred learning, where the teacher's role is that of a facilitator of learning, and this is particularly crucial in teaching spirituality (Hodge & Derezotes, 2008; Lindholm & Astin, 2008). Such a class requires a language of spirituality which is understandable by both the academics and students, catering to the diverse student cohort in a sensitive manner (Baha'i International Community, 2010; Lindholm & Astin, 2008). The academics discussed pedagogical approaches they use to teach other units, explaining that these could also be used to teach spirituality, including discussions (Lindholm & Astin, 2008; Marques et al., 2014), reflective practice (Horner & Tucker, 2013; Rockenbach et al., 2015), case studies, and storytelling (Manz et al., 2006; Marques et al., 2014). Academics felt that, to teach spirituality, these teaching methods would need to be used in combination just as they did with their other units. Two academics who taught spiritual wellbeing also advocated the same pedagogical approaches and had actually used them for teaching aspects of spirituality.

The literature suggests that while other topics allow independent student self-exploration, spirituality requires more engagement amongst students and academics at a personal level, which may become challenging and emotional at times (Trott, 2013; Allison & Broadus, 2009; Bush, 1999; Horner & Tucker, 2013; Rockenbach et al. 2015). Based on their experiences, some academics in FoE and TSBE also felt similarly. While one academic talked about teaching spirituality online as

challenging, literature suggests that it is possible in that context as well (Lindholm & Astin, 2008).

Some academics also shared their experiences of how they felt they were teaching spirituality, directly and indirectly. This was interesting as some of these academics also felt that spirituality should not be taught at the university.

7.5.1 Implications from this Study

Although numerous studies have been conducted in the area of spirituality, there seems to be a gap in research into appropriate pedagogical approaches for teaching it in higher education. Most of the literature suggests using student-centred approaches, where the academics' role is that of a facilitator, in a small classroom setting, which is similar to how other units are expected to be taught at the university. The need for a language that is understood by all to teach spirituality was also apparent, and would require academics to have open discussions with students and other stakeholders, to determine suitable words for spiritual concepts that could be used in a higher education classroom.

One of the issues with teaching spirituality is that it cannot be taught to large groups of students. Universities have large cohorts of students and as it is financially impossible for universities to have smaller student cohorts, these large cohorts could be divided into smaller groups of students within one class, and allow them to address spirituality using some of the methodologies discussed above.

7.5.2 Implications for Future Study

It appears that not much research has been done to identify the appropriate pedagogical approaches to teaching spirituality. Research should be conducted to test the suggested pedagogical approaches for teaching spirituality in higher education. To

identify how different academics could teach spirituality, academics who feel that they have a spiritual or a non-spiritual base could be selected to identify the impact of their pedagogical approaches on students. To develop a spiritual language, academics could start with having individual and group meetings and discussions across the university to find out how different people view spirituality and words they use to discuss the concept. The process for determining the language base could also be the subject of research. Later on, it could be carried forward to the wider society to identify more viewpoints on spirituality and the language it requires to be understood by all.

7.6 Finding 5: The Impact of Teaching Spirituality on the Development of Students' Professional Identities

The second research question in this study also explored academics' perceptions of whether teaching spirituality within the faculties of business and education could impact the professional identities of their students. Based on their interviews, academics from FoE and TSBE believed that the way they taught their students would help the students develop as confident and effective professionals, who would make well-informed ethical decisions. The academics hoped that, as professionals, their students would use attributes and values that foster human rights, diversity, and respect for all in their workplace and related these to spirituality. It appears that academics from FoE and TSBE responded to the question of spirituality and professional identity by talking about the overarching concept of professionalism in general, and not professional identity specifically (as discussed in sections 6.7, 6.8).

Some academics in FoE felt that the inclusion of spirituality could have a positive impact on their student's professionalism, as teaching is altruistic in nature, providing both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Others hoped that their pre-service teachers would continue reflecting on their teaching, and use their spirituality to develop their professionalism after they graduate. Similarly, academics in TSBE felt that spirituality in the business curriculum would have a fundamental impact on students' professionalism as it will allow them to explore who they are and what they want to be. One TSBE academic believed that education is a transformational process and spirituality would help students transform into professionals who could empathise with others and be open to possibilities, enabling them to be the best managers and leaders they can be. The academics also felt that teaching spirituality could improve students' reasoning abilities, and create an awareness around the notion that spirituality can exist outside religion. Gunz and Gunz (2007) and Ibarra (1999) assert that organisations expect universities to develop students' professional identities and attributes in ways that could impact their workplace environment positively, and should be adaptable to the needs of the organisation. The academics appeared to think that spirituality and related concepts might contribute to this development.

7.6.1 Implications from this Study

Professional identity is related to how individuals see themselves in a particular profession. Academics from FoE and TSBE discussed aspects of the professionalism in general that they expect of their students, but failed to address the specific concept of professional identity. This renders part of the research question unanswered regarding whether spirituality may influence the professional identities of graduates emerging from FoE and TSBE. Nonetheless, the data reveal another aspect

of how academics view the influence of spirituality on the development of their students as professionals. Some academics felt that allowing students to explore their spirituality would help them understand the diversity they would find in the workplace, which may enable them to make humane and ethical decisions. Others suggested that spirituality could enable students to develop attributes such as kindness, justice, and love, concepts associated with practices of spirituality (Brussat & Brussat, 2017) that would help them connect with themselves and others. Academics were able to discuss professionalism and its requirements, but as none of the academics discussed professional identity, it can be assumed that academics are still unaware of the term.

Most academics in TSBE felt that teaching spirituality, but without any religious emphasis, would be beneficial for the development of their students' professionalism. Some felt that they were already teaching concepts they believed were associated with spirituality, and their units could be modified to address more aspects of spirituality. Compared to FoE, academics in TSBE suggested more units that could be taught in their curriculum, and a few also felt that spirituality could be embedded within the whole university curriculum for all students to develop as professionals.

7.6.2 Implications for Future Study

The data suggest the need for more academic research around the concept of spirituality and professional identities. Despite several studies in the areas of business and management, significant studies that demonstrate spirituality's impact on business professionals' identities are still lacking. Similarly, there is a lack of evidence the role of spirituality could play in teachers' professional identity

development. It is suggested that research is conducted in both areas of teacher education and business education, individually, with a focus on professional identities.

7.7 Contradictory Findings

Although the five findings discussed above are relatively clear-cut, there were some contradictory statements made by the academics. Some academics in both faculties viewed religion negatively, as a cause of wars and dissensions in the world, but still participated in various religious services and activities. For example, one atheist participant was in a church choir, and sang Christian songs even in choirs abroad, without disclosing his non-belief. Other non-religious participants celebrated Christmas and other religious holidays but were strongly against religious spirituality. They acknowledged ascribing to Christian and Buddhist values but not the faiths themselves. Some participants stated that while they were not religious, they were spiritual, but they were unable to define spirituality well. Most participants inquired about the definition of spirituality used in this study and some were taken aback when informed that the study was not pre-supposing a set definition.

Some non-religious participants argued that spirituality should not be taught at the university, yet suggested some units with spirituality that could be beneficial for students' professional development. Interestingly, some religious participants also felt that spirituality would be challenging to teach within their faculty, but they had suggestions on how to teach the concept in the best possible way.

7.8 Recommendations for Further Research

The major challenge that emerged from this study was the lack of an academic definition of spirituality, which was not provided for this study and no academic attempted to define it. This resulted in a vagueness to the discussion, with academics themselves unable to clarify or define their concepts, using phrases such as “spirituality is a broad construct”, but with no explanation given about what they meant by “broad construct”. It is suggested that undertaking further study similar to this would require the development of a working definition, the provision of one from literature, or a specific request to participants to formulate their own definition of spirituality. This could help a future study to become less complicated as it would provide a baseline for exploring the concept.

Specific research could be conducted to determine the impact of a unit on spirituality for students and the organisations that employ them, to determine whether the construct has merit for developing attributes such as connection with self and others, respect for diversity, and effective, values-based decision-making. In addition, it is recommended to examine the effectiveness of some of the suggested pedagogical approaches to teaching spirituality, and use action based research to identify the most appropriate approach that could help students within their professional lives.

The concept of professional identity could be further explored, with a focus on spirituality. It might be particularly useful to conduct a more detailed study, just focusing on a single profession/faculty. In addition, students’ viewpoints could be explored simultaneously alongside those of the academics.

The use of an exploratory multiple case study is appropriate for a short-term research project. Other methodological approaches might offer other insights. For

example, action-based research could be used to explore the development of and teaching approaches used in a unit on spirituality, with time to allow cycles of refinement of the unit over a number of iterations. Another long-term approach to researching spirituality in higher education could use ethnography, by integrating the researcher into the educational system. Spirituality could be embedded within the university's curriculum, as suggested by some academics, or taught as units within different faculties, and the researcher could participate in all the teaching and learning activities over a long period to ascertain the impact of spirituality on students' professional identity development.

Further studies could include research work from the areas of positive psychology, which considers spiritual wellbeing (Pargament, 2013), emotional intelligence where work is being done at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence (2018), and compassion and altruism studies, which are being conducted at The Centre for Compassion and Altruism at Stanford (2018). Some courses are being offered at The Center for Contemplative Studies at Brown University (2018), which could provide insights into developing units to be taught in higher education and deserve further research.

7.9 Limitations of the Study

Several limitations are acknowledged for this study, which may have impacted the results and have implications for future research. These would require attention when designing a similar study.

1. The findings of this study are not generalizable to the wider academic population in Australia or elsewhere, due to being conducted in a specific regional context of a single university and limited to two faculties. The

University of Tasmania has a unique position within Australia, being the only university within the state of Tasmania, with its major campuses within the state. The two faculties selected for this study provide education within Tasmanian, Australian, and international contexts, but lack the diversity found in other universities within Australia. As a result, most participants in the study were of Australian backgrounds with only a few from overseas, and so the viewpoints may not be very diverse.

2. Although all participants were provided with the interview schedule prior to the interview, and despite conducting the interview in their offices, some participants felt uneasy as they were unclear about what to say at the beginning of the interview, particularly about their understanding of spirituality. As a result, academics reflected on their understanding of spirituality as the interviews progressed, and some questions were answered much later during the interview, which created confusion during data analysis.
3. The lack of understanding of some concepts such as spirituality, pedagogy, and professional identity may have limited the participants from providing relevant data for this study. This may have contributed to the overlap of concepts across the study, which made coding the data a challenge at times.
4. The responses made by the academics indicate their perceptions and beliefs at the time of their interviews but may not reflect their current understanding due to the lapse of time between conducting the interviews and presenting the results in this study.

5. As the participants within each faculty knew each other, there may have been some inhibitions in responses by some for fear of being identified in the study.

7.10 Contribution to the Field

This study makes a contribution to the academic field in the following ways:

1. It provides an insight into the nature of spirituality and the challenges around developing an academic definition that is not contestable.
2. It demonstrates the disconnect or confusion, particularly in respect of definitions, understanding, and uses of the term spirituality, between the viewpoints of academics whose professional expertise is the study of spirituality, and academics whose field of expertise is elsewhere.
3. It gives an insight into the way academics within Tasmania understand spirituality within their higher education context.
4. It provides a springboard to further explore the role of spirituality in higher education, for other faculties besides education and business.
5. It provides insight into the assumptions and challenges faced in incorporating spirituality within higher education.
6. It contributes towards a deeper understanding of the concepts associated with spirituality, and the way they may be present within higher education, despite not being specifically labelled “spirituality”.
7. It presents suggestions for pedagogical approaches that are deemed useful for teaching spirituality.
8. It identifies the confusion amongst academics regarding teaching a unit about spirituality and teaching using one’s own spirituality.

7.11 Conclusion

The purpose of this exploratory multiple case study was to explore how academics viewed spirituality, how spirituality might be included in higher education, and whether its incorporation would impact the professional identities of students. It explored the concept of spirituality as understood by academics with the assumption from theory that spirituality is not necessarily religious in nature. Some of the literature that contributed to this assumption arose from Crossman (2003), Lips-Wiersma and Mills (2014), Manz et al. (2006), and Neal (2008).

One of the most important findings of this study is that all academics viewed spirituality as synonymous with religion, irrespective of their backgrounds. Most were unaware that the term could be conceptualised outside religion and some non-religious or atheist academics initially felt challenged discussing spirituality because of this. The semi-structured interview questions allowed academics to reflect and identify their own understanding of spirituality. This helped academics to view concepts they were already teaching as associated with spirituality and to advocate for aspects of it to be included within the curriculum.

The data revealed a wide range of understanding of spirituality and related it to religion, ethics, morals, values, the *Golden Rule*, diversity, ethical decision-making, and leadership. All these concepts have the underpinnings of religion, but without the organisational practices and belief systems that identify with organised religion or a deity. All academics seemed to associate spirituality with being good and doing good to others, with a touch of transcendence for some, or wonderment and awe for others. Teaching such a concept would require academics to feel the need to include such “irrational”, and “non-cognitive” content within their curricula, and devise student-

centred pedagogical approaches to teach the concept. As perceived by some academics, the university's graduate attributes reflect some spiritual dimension to them and could be a starting point to start a conversation on the concept of spirituality within higher education.

This study also explored how academics viewed the incorporation of spirituality within the curricula of the two faculties. Most academics in both faculties felt that spirituality existed within their respective curricula, but indirectly through concepts associated with the term. Some felt that it was already in the hidden curriculum, and should be encouraged even more, while others suggested that spirituality could be taught as units, such as "Spirituality and Decision-Making." Some also suggested incorporating it within all units within the two faculties, and others suggested it to be embedded within the university's broader curriculum.

Academics also suggested student-centred pedagogical approaches to teaching the concept which included discussions, storytelling, case studies, reflective essays, and individual exploration. These were similar to those recommended in literature, and to those used, often successfully, in teaching other units. Academics also felt that teaching spirituality would also require an all-inclusive language and a safe environment. It seems that most of the academics were teaching *with* spirituality, as they embodied it, and some academics felt that teaching was their calling, reflecting that they felt some transcendent sense of purpose in their work. However, more research is needed over an extended period of time to identify the best practice to teach the concept effectively.

The challenges perceived by some academics to incorporating spirituality in higher education—such as the lack of a definition, and uncertainty over the extent to which it is perceived as "main-stream"—could be overcome by starting discourses

and dialogues on the need and importance of spirituality within academia internationally. Perhaps a discussion on the different courses and units offered by universities worldwide could open universities within Australia to take up the challenge of incorporating spirituality within their curricula. The misconception of the separation of the church and state could also be clarified, which could enable academics to feel more at ease discussing spirituality.

While academics in this study tried to address the impact of spirituality on their students' professional identities, they mainly discussed professionalism, a very specific part of which is professional identity. Nevertheless, academics felt that incorporating spirituality in higher education would be beneficial for students' professional development.

With spirituality in higher education still a relatively new area of study, especially within Australia, this study provides some insights into academics' perceptions of spirituality and its place in education and professional development. It revealed, however, that more in-depth study is still required to identify spirituality as a concept that could be taught in higher education, and the potential benefits it could have on graduating professionals. The reason for this is evidenced in the contradictory statements by academics in this study, which suggests that there is a lack of clarity of the concept of spirituality in general. Nevertheless, both the literature and the academics interviewed for this study intimated that the teaching of spirituality has the potential to enable students to interconnect with themselves, others and the transcendent, which could help them become more ethical, wise, compassionate, and well-rounded professionals.

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Appendix A

Ethics Approval p.1

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HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (TASMANIA) NETWORK

16 February 2015

Dr Kerry Howells
Faculty of Education
Private Bag 66

Student Researcher: Lubna Siddiqi

Sent via email

Dear Dr Howells

Re: MINIMAL RISK ETHICS APPLICATION APPROVAL
Ethics Ref: **H0014638 - Academic viewpoints of spirituality in higher education, and its place in developing the future management and education professionals: A qualitative exploration**

We are pleased to advise that acting on a mandate from the Tasmania Social Sciences HREC, the Deputy Chair of the committee considered and approved the above project on 27 January 2015.

This approval constitutes ethical clearance by the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. The decision and authority to commence the associated research may be dependent on factors beyond the remit of the ethics review process. For example, your research may need ethics clearance from other organisations or review by your research governance coordinator or Head of Department. It is your responsibility to find out if the approval of other bodies or authorities is required. It is recommended that the proposed research should not commence until you have satisfied these requirements.

Please note that this approval is for four years and is conditional upon receipt of an annual Progress Report. Ethics approval for this project will lapse if a Progress Report is not submitted.

The following conditions apply to this approval. Failure to abide by these conditions may result in suspension or discontinuation of approval.

1. It is the responsibility of the Chief Investigator to ensure that all investigators are aware of the terms of approval, to ensure the project is conducted as approved by the Ethics

A PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Appendix A

Ethics Approval p.2

Committee, and to notify the Committee if any investigators are added to, or cease involvement with, the project.

2. Complaints: If any complaints are received or ethical issues arise during the course of the project, investigators should advise the Executive Officer of the Ethics Committee on 03 6226 7479 or human.ethics@utas.edu.au.
3. Incidents or adverse effects: Investigators should notify the Ethics Committee immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events affecting the ethical acceptability of the project.
4. Amendments to Project: Modifications to the project must not proceed until approval is obtained from the Ethics Committee. Please submit an Amendment Form (available on our website) to notify the Ethics Committee of the proposed modifications.
5. Annual Report: Continued approval for this project is dependent on the submission of a Progress Report by the anniversary date of your approval. You will be sent a courtesy reminder closer to this date. **Failure to submit a Progress Report will mean that ethics approval for this project will lapse.**
6. Final Report: A Final Report and a copy of any published material arising from the project, either in full or abstract, must be provided at the end of the project.

Yours sincerely

Katherine Shaw
Executive Officer
Tasmania Social Sciences HREC

Appendix B

Invitation to Participate in the Study



Email [Appendix A/1] [January 2015]

Dear Academics,

You are invited to participate in a research study "*Academic Viewpoints of Spirituality in Higher Education, and its Place in Developing the Future Management and Education Professionals: a Qualitative Exploration*" that is being conducted in partial fulfillment of a PhD Degree for Lubna Asrar Siddiqi from the Faculty of Education (FoE), under the supervision of Dr. Kerry Howells (FoE), Associate Professor Dr. Mark Dibben from Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE) & Dr. Rob Macklin (TSBE).

As the title suggests, this study focuses on the role of spirituality in higher education within the two faculties mentioned. Being an academic, your views on the concept of spirituality, and its implications for higher education towards the development of professional identities is very important and is an unexplored research area within Tasmania. Whatever your views on spirituality in higher education, your participation in this research would be valuable.

The study will be conducted in two phases:

Phase 1: A one-on-one, semi structured individual interview

Phase 2: A faculty specific focus group interview

Each phase will require approximately 60 minutes of your time. A detailed Information Sheet about the study is being provided to you with this email.

In addition, a Participant Consent Form is also being attached with this email with the hope of your consent to participate in this study. We hope to receive the duly signed form by, January 15, 2015, so that we may begin the research as soon as possible, but at a time that is convenient to you.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Kind Regards

Lubna Siddiqi

Appendix C

Participant Information Sheet p.1



Participant Information Sheet [Appendix A/2] [January 2015]

Academic Viewpoints of Spirituality in Higher Education, and its Place in Developing the Future Management and Education Professionals: a Qualitative Exploration

This information sheet is for the Academics from the Faculty of Education (FoE) and Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE) within the University of Tasmania (UTas).

1. Invitation

You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted in partial fulfillment of a PhD Degree for Lubna Asrar Siddiqi (FoE), under the supervision of Dr Kerry Howells (FoE), Associate Professor Dr Mark Dibben (TSBE) & Dr Rob Macklin (TSBE). This qualitative study is about exploring the role of spirituality in higher education in developing professionals who come out of the university.

2. What is the purpose of this study?

This study aims to explore the concept of spirituality and how you, the academic, view spirituality and the possible ways in which you might either directly or indirectly incorporate it in your teaching and associated activities. In addition, this study would also like to explore the pedagogical approaches and the philosophy you might use to incorporate spirituality into your curricula to enable the development of the future identities of the graduates emerging from UTas.

This study will take place over two phases:

Phase 1- one on one interview

The first phase of the study aims to collect information from all participants on a one to one basis, exploring individual points of view of each academic on the concept of spirituality, its utility in higher education, the pedagogical approaches (if applicable) that could be used to teach the concept to develop the professional identities of your students as they leave the university.

Phase 2- Faculty Specific Focus Group

The second phase of this research will provide you with an opportunity to discuss openly with the other participants / academics of your faculty about the points discussed in the individual interview. This will enable this study to identify each faculty's academics' view of spirituality in higher education, and a discussion will help develop clarity towards the concept and may result in faculty specific definition of spirituality.

Appendix C

Participant Information Sheet p.2



Participant Information Sheet [Appendix 2] [January 2015]

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to participate in this research as the participants required for this study are academics from the Faculties of Education and TSBE. Regardless of your views, your experiences and knowledge will contribute greatly to the collective understanding of the concept of spirituality and insights in understanding whether spirituality is a concept that is incorporated within the two faculties in UTas and whether or not it could be beneficial towards the development the future identities of the professionals who graduate from those faculties.

Please remember that your involvement in this research is entirely voluntary and there will be no consequences, including your relationship with the university, if you decide not to participate at any stage of this research.

What will I be asked to do?

This study will be conducted in two phases, and you are welcome to only volunteer for the first phase.

In the first phase, you will be invited to an individual interview, where you will be asked to answer semi-structured questions relating to your understanding of spirituality in higher education and its impact on the development of professional identities of your students.

It is expected that this interview will take about 60 minutes of your time preferably in your office space.

You will also be invited to take part in the second phase via email, where you will participate in a faculty specific focus group and the same concept of spirituality will be explored with a wider and collective view of the faculty. You will be expected to discuss or argue on whether or not having spirituality within your specific faculty will have an impact on the development of the professional identities of your students. This focus group interview is also expected to take about 60 minutes of your time, in a space arranged within your faculty.

The two phases will be audiotaped and transcribed. You will also have the opportunity to review and correct your transcripts. The researcher will also seek your permission to quote you by name, if something substantially important is discovered during this study.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and unless permission is granted to use your quotes and name for the write up, all information will remain confidential. However, confidentiality may not be guaranteed with the discussions carried out within the focus group.

Appendix C

Participant Information Sheet p.3



Participant Information Sheet [Appendix 2] [January 2015]

Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?

The information that you provide for this study will enable us to gain an insight into the role of spirituality towards developing the future professional identities of graduates emerging from UTas. It may also present an opportunity for you to reflect on your own teaching practices and some of the issues associated with students within your classroom.

The focus groups will also enable us to understand how the academics in both faculties view the concept of spirituality. They will also provide an opportunity for both faculties to consider whether or not incorporating the concept in any form, within their curricula, would be beneficial for the development of the professional identities of their students. In addition, it may also contribute towards identifying pedagogical approaches, if any, that could be used to enable the professionals developed by these two faculties to fulfill this newly identified global workplace requirement.

Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?

As this study is looking into the value of using spirituality within a specific academic context, there is no particular risk. However, maximum care will be taken during the facilitation of the focus groups that emotional or other risks may be mitigated.

For ethical purposes, it is essential that you do not in any way feel pressured to participate in the study. Although, Lubna will interview you personally and will facilitate the focus groups, she will not reveal or disclose your identity to anyone at any stage.

What if I change my mind during or after the study?

If at any time, you choose to withdraw from this study, you are free to do so without providing an explanation.

Although the data collected through the individual interview may be withdrawn at an earlier stage, it may not be possible to withdraw your responses and the data gathered anonymously during focus group interviews.

What will happen to the information when this study is over?

The information you provide will be stored and archived for 5 years from the date of first publication. The data will be treated by the researcher in a confidential manner and any information you provide will be used only for the purpose(s) of this study. *Participants of the focus groups will be requested to keep discussions confidential, however, this cannot be guaranteed.*

Appendix C

Participant Information Sheet p.4



Participant Information Sheet [Appendix 2] [January 2015]

How will the results of the study be published?

The findings from this study will be published in the PhD thesis and disseminated in conferences and journal publications both on paper and online. You will be able to access them from the UTas website after May 2017, after the completion of this study.

What if I have questions about this study?

If you have any queries from the researchers you may please contact

Lubna Siddiqi: lubna.siddiqi@utas.edu.au or (03) 6226 2536.

Alternatively, you can contact either

Dr. Kerry Howells: kerry.howells@utas.edu.au (03) 6226 2567

Dr. Mark Dibben: mark.dibben@utas.edu.au (03) 6226 2781

Dr. Rob Macklin: rob.macklin@utas.edu.au (03) 6226 1713

This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on +61 3 6226 7479 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants.

This information sheet is for you to keep. Thank you in anticipation for your participation in all the phases of this research study.

Appendix D

Participant Consent Form p.1



Participant Consent Form [Appendix A/3] [January 2015]

Academic viewpoints of spirituality in higher education, and its place in developing the future management and education professionals: A qualitative exploration

This consent form is for the Academics from the Faculty of Education (FoE) and Tasmanian School of Business and Economics (TSBE) within the University of Tasmania, (UTas) participating in individual and focus group interviews.

1. I agree to take part in the research study named above.
2. I have read and understood the Information Sheet for this study.
3. The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.
4. I understand that the study involves an individual interview and a faculty specific focus group interview. Each of these interviews will be approximately 60 minutes long. These will be audio taped and transcribed professionally; the transcriptions will be sent for review to ensure accuracy.
5. I agree to participate in
Individual Interview ☐ Faculty Specific Focus Group ☐
6. I understand that participation involves no foreseeable risks as the interviews will be conducted on campus within the workplace, and no personal information will be gathered.
7. I understand that all research data will be securely stored on the University of Tasmania's premises for five years from the publication of the study results, and will then be destroyed unless I give permission for my data to be stored in an archive.
I agree to have my study data archived.
Yes ☐ No ☐
8. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
9. I understand that the researcher(s) will maintain confidentiality and that any information I supply to the researcher(s) will be used only for the purposes of the research. However, the researcher cannot guarantee confidentiality by the members participating in the focus group interview.
10. I understand that the results of the study will be published in a way that I will not be identified as a participant. However, I will be sending the results as they are reported in advance of publication, in case further de-identification is needed.
Yes ☐ No ☐
11. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without any effect.

Appendix D

Participant Consent Form p.2



Participant Consent Form [Appendix A/3] [January 2015]

If I so wish, I may request that any data I have supplied through individual interview be withdrawn from the research by June 2015. However, it will not be possible to withdraw the data gathered anonymously from the focus group interviews.

Participant's name: _____

Participant's signature: _____

Date: _____

Statement by Investigator

☐

I have explained the project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

If the Investigator has not had an opportunity to talk to participants prior to them participating, the following must be ticked.

☐

The participant has received the Information Sheet where my details have been provided so participants have had the opportunity to contact me prior to consenting to participate in this project.

Investigator's name: _____

Investigator's signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix E

Interview Schedule

Appendix 4, January 2015

Interview Schedule

This research project will utilise qualitative semi-structured individual and focus group interviews as methods of data collection. Four main questions will be used to generate the information required for this study. It is expected that more interview questions will emerge and develop during the interviews as the project advances. Any significant changes to this schedule will be notified by an ethics amendment.

There are five main questions that address the Research Question. Sub questions emerged during the pilot testing which may or may not be similar in all cases but will focus around the same theme and data generation.

Interview Schedule

Preamble:

The Melbourne declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (2008, p.09) talks explicitly about developing “confident and creative individuals who have a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual wellbeing.” Partly in response to this aim, this study is exploring the role of spirituality in education. However, it is important for you to understand that in agreeing to be interviewed I’m not expecting you to confirm or deny any preconceptions that you may think I’m expecting to hear. It is important for you to know that anything you say about spirituality is immensely valuable and you will never be asked to justify

1. When you think about spirituality, what are some of the ideas, connotations and experiences that come to your mind?
2. When you think about each of these elements and ideas that are related to spirituality, how do you consider the differences between spirituality, ethics and morals and values?
3. In what ways do you embody these spiritual aspects, and how do they influence your pedagogical thinking in teaching?
4. How would you build a curriculum that could incorporate some of the concepts associated with spirituality and how would you teach them? Would you do it directly or indirectly?
5. In what ways do you feel these aspects may influence the development of your students’ identities as professionals?

Appendix F

Applied Spirituality

Spirituality in higher can be taught as an “applied science” (Flanagan, 2011, p. 48), through practical application of the theory being taught. This requires in-depth understanding of “the nature of spiritual education,” the content, and suitable teaching approaches to enable students to practically apply their learning in their lives (Flanagan, 2011).

Flanagan (2011) studied one of the postgraduate programs called Applied Spirituality, which was developed in response to students requiring practical application of spiritual values in the workplace. It was offered at the Milltown Institute in Ireland, a theological higher education institution. The core of the program focused on four themes: “theological and historical foundations for spirituality, personal spiritual processes, spiritual and counselling skills training, and a research project in an applied aspect of spirituality” (p. 40). The mature-aged participants included lawyers, business and medical professionals, educators, and theologians, who wanted to be able to apply spirituality to their personal and professional lives (Flanagan, 2011). The pedagogical approaches used to teach spirituality required educators to allow students to work independently and utilised assessment tasks, such as reflective writing, based on personal and professional experiences that they believed were spiritual in nature (Flanagan, 2011).

Students were oriented towards the program by reading and discussing the daily personal and social activities they undertook, to identify their spirituality. For example, students may have experienced a painful event, like the suicide of a loved

one, or frustration with their fast-paced life, preventing them from reflecting about life and their work. These experiences could be discussed in group settings. As the program was based on theology, concepts like “spiritual literacy” and “spiritual intelligence” (Flanagan, 2011, p. 48) were taught. These two concepts enable students to be inspired through values and do no harm to anyone or anything. After the readings and discussions, students were expected to reflect upon and journal their lived experiences, and discuss the success or failure of applying spirituality (Flanagan, 2011).

The institute also had a mentoring program that enabled students to seek guidance and counselling through their mentors on a one-on-one basis, outside the classroom. Students shared their reflections, in confidence, with their mentors twice a year, to observe the recurring patterns that caused them distress in life and explore spiritual solutions. This enabled students to review their progress and connect theory to practice where needed. Some students also wrote essays on topics around spirituality and its application in real life, and allowed them to be shared with students the following year as readings such as “Sexuality, Gender and Spirituality” and “Forms of Spirituality” (Flanagan, 2011, p. 43). Flanagan (2011), a researcher from Milltown, found this program to be effective, as student enrolments increased from 18 to 29 from 2001 to 2009. Student cohorts were kept small and student-centred approaches were used to teach applied spirituality for greater effectiveness.